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# ONCE UPON A TIME.



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**"ONCE UPON A TIME," SAID SHE.**

# ONCE UPON A TIME.

*PLAY-STORIES FOR CHILDREN.*

BY  
EMMA E. BROWN.



BOSTON:  
D. LOTHROP AND COMPANY,  
FRANKLIN ST., CORNER OF HAWLEY.

KD 4903

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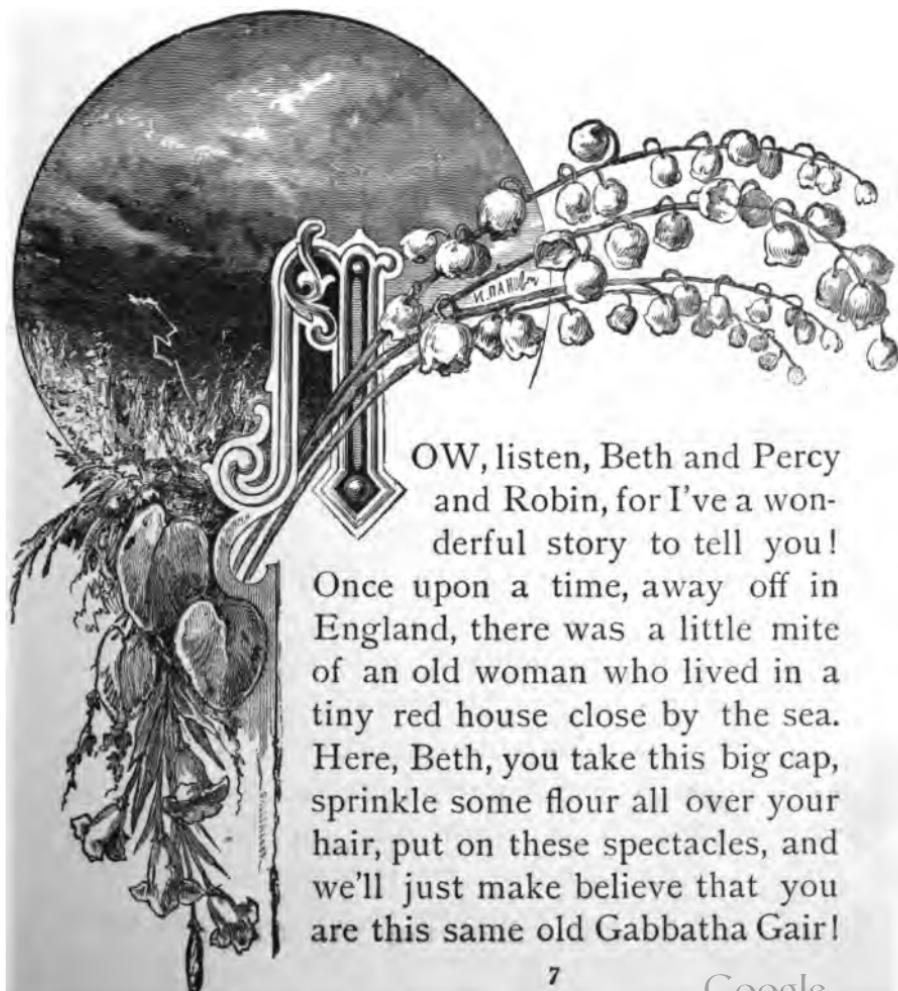
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## GABBATHA GAIR.



OW, listen, Beth and Percy  
and Robin, for I've a won-  
derful story to tell you!  
Once upon a time, away off in  
England, there was a little mite  
of an old woman who lived in a  
tiny red house close by the sea.  
Here, Beth, you take this big cap,  
sprinkle some flour all over your  
hair, put on these spectacles, and  
we'll just make believe that you  
are this same old Gabbatha Gair!

Mamma's blue and green plaid shawl will do for the sea, if we spread it out all over the floor; and this chair, covered with crimson chintz, we'll play was the little red house.

Now, one night there was a dreadful storm at sea—get the big bright dish-pan and bang it with an iron spoon, Percy—that'll do for the thunder and lightning!—and old Gabbatha, when she looked out of the window, saw a ship tossing on the waves not far from shore.

"Poor creatures!" she exclaimed, "they'll surely be wrecked on these sharp rocks if I don't giv' 'em some sort o' warnin'!" And so saying, she lighted her little tallow candle and put it in the window. Next morning the storm had all cleared away, the sun was shining brightly, but there was nothing to be seen of the ship.

When the tide went out, however, Gabbatha saw a lot of drift-wood on the beach and went down to gather an apron full; for she was very poor and had nothing else to make her fire of.

As she stooped down to pick up a large piece of wood, she saw something glittering in a mass



**"THIS SAME OLD GABBATHA GAIR!"**

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of black sea weed thrown upon the beach. Hobbling along to get a nearer view, she saw it was an odd-shaped box made of some sort of shining metal ; and poking off the seaweed with her crutch, she took it up in her hands and tried to open it — get the smallest tin cracker box, Robin — we 'll play it looked something like that !

Well, she tried and tried, but it wouldn't open, until finally she got a big hammer and knocked off the hinges ! And what *do* you think she found inside ? Money ? no ! Jewels ? no ! Piles of gold and silver ? No ! no ! Nothing of that kind whatever !

First of all, there were a few layers of newspapers — all printed in a foreign language that Gabbatha couldn't understand — then there were odd-shaped leaves very dry and brown, and rolled up inside the leaves were funny looking articles all twisted together. Just hand me that wrapping paper, Percy, and I'll show you how they looked — something like big "lamplighters," you see !

Well, poor Gabbatha, as you may imagine, was very much disappointed, and keeping only the box which she thought might do for something, she tossed the contents out into the little yard.

Weeks and weeks went by; Gabbatha had forgotten all about the storm and the little box with its strange contents, until one day, when she looked out of the window, she saw a row of tiny green heads just peeping out of the earth!

You see those funny looking "twists" were dried-up pods all full of seeds, and under Gabbatha's window they had found just the kind of soil they liked best!

Well, the curious plants grew very rapidly, threw out long tendrils, and began to climb all over the door and windows. Gabbatha was delighted and tended the vines very carefully, all the time wondering what they could be, for nobody in the village had ever seen anything like them before.

One day an old sailor came to the little red house to get a drink of water. (You must be the sailor, Robin, for you've got on your blue flannel

suit!) "Why, why! Wherever in the world did yer git all them *vanilla* vines? They be worth a fortin' to yer!" exclaimed the old sailor, as he took one of the long tendrils in his hand.

Then he told Gabbatha how rare the plants were, and what great prices were paid for single vanilla beans in the London markets. "For yer see," he continued "they don't grow nat'r'l like on this side the water; and folks pays a heavy duty on them as comes from Vera Cruz."

Gabbatha clapped her hands with delight; and although she hated to spoil the looks of her pretty vines she cut every one of them back, as the sailor told her she must do to make them blossom, and then she seared every one of the young shoots with a red-hot iron.

I suppose that was the reason the vanilla vines bore such a plentiful crop of beans; for Gabbatha carried baskets of them to market; and made so much money that in a few years there was not a richer person in the whole village—now put on your most comfortable look, Beth!—than little Miss Gabbatha Gair.

## DOCTOR JENNIE.



NCE upon a time—and it was not a very long time ago—there was a little sick boy just about as big as Robin, who had to lie in bed all day—week in and week out! You cuddle up on the lounge, Robin, and we'll cover you with shawls and play you are Ralph.

It was a big noisy city where they lived—Ralph and his mother—and when the little cot he lay upon was moved up to the window so that Ralph could look out, all he ever saw were high brick walls and rumbling carts and crowds of people going back and forth to their work.

There was a railroad station close to the tenement where they lived, and one day when Ralph was looking out of the window, he saw a little girl who had just come in the cars with her father.

Get your tin locomotive, Percy, and send it off

puffing, round there in the corner, for that, we'll play, was the depot! And you mustn't get too near, for there were big buildings between, so Ralph couldn't ever see the cars.

Well, as I said, this little girl passed by one day and saw Ralph at the window. Now Madge, you put on your hat, and take mamma's shopping bag on your arm, and play you were this same little girl. You must get some flowers, too, for Jennie—that was the little girl's name—had a bunch of blue violets she had picked out in the fields that morning, and when she looked up and saw poor Ralph's pale face, and great wistful eyes, she just took a whole handful of the flowers and tossed them in with a little smile and a bow.

O Robin! You can't begin to look as glad as Ralph did, however you do very well for a little "make believe" sick boy!

When Jennie came in next morning, she brought another bunch of violets—a good deal bigger than the first—and lots of buttercups and red columbines.



**"WASN'T THERE ANYTHING SHE COULD DO FOR HIM?"**

But poor little Ralph had had a very restless night, and was not at the window that morning.

Jennie was ever so much disappointed, and begged her father to let her stop at the door, and ask about the little boy, and leave the flowers.

(Here, Madge, this is the door, and I'll be the mother!)

Oh dear! how it made Jennie's heart ache when she looked into that dark, miserable little room and saw poor Ralph moaning with pain!

Wasn't there anything she could do for him? All day long the wee, white face haunted her, and when she went home she couldn't talk of anything but poor little Ralph and his wretched home.

"Don't you think, mother dear," she said, "some nice, rich country milk would be good for him?"

"Perhaps so, at any rate you shall take him a little can, to-morrow," said her mother, "and if the bantums have laid some eggs to-day, you might carry him some of them in your willow lunch basket."

Jennie just clapped her hands with delight.  
“Oh good, goodey, mother!”

Every day Jennie came into the city to school; and every day after that she brought something to poor Ralph and his mother.

Sometimes, she was in a great hurry and couldn’t stop but a second; so she fixed a little basket on a rope — just this way, Madge, so it would go up and down easily — and fastened it to Ralph’s window. Then she told him how to lower it, when the whistle sounded and the train came; and it was just fun for Ralph to hoist the little gift-basket up and down!

“And how is your patient to-day, Doctor Jennie?” her father would inquire every night when she came home from school.

“Oh, better — better — almost well!” she would reply; and, indeed, it was very evident that Ralph was rapidly gaining under Doctor Jennie’s excellent treatment.

When the hot July days came and Jennie’s school closed, the little patient was invited to take a week’s “outing” on the farm.

He could bear the journey now, and Doctor Jennie declared that he needed "a change of scene."

The mother came, too, for little Ralph could not go without her; and oh! what a grand time they had together!



Heigho! Robin you must jump off the lounge now, and we'll all have a frolic out in the fields, for this is Doctor Jennie's last prescription.

## PIERRE'S SONG.



"HY Percy! What in the world are you doing with mamma's mending basket and my music sheets?" exclaimed Madge, as she opened the play-room door one dull, rainy morning.

"Why its our story-day—don't you know? and there is just the nicest 'once upon a time' to be told after I get things fixed!"

"All right Sir Percival, only do please be careful and don't tear that 'Fairy Waltz' of mine!"

"I'll look out for that, don't you worry, Madame Malibran"—began Robin, but here Percy suddenly clapped a little brown hand over the telltale lips.

Uncle Joe's big bandanna handkerchief was tied very tightly over the great willow basket and then Robin fastened numerous wabs of cot-

ton cloth upon the tip end of his "hoople" sticks. The music sheets were pinned up on the back of an old chair, the sofa was drawn out into the middle of the room, and a big sheet of yellow paper—covered with Percy's own hieroglyphics—was pasted up in one corner.

Can't you see how it all looked, little readers? Well, then, I will tell you the story that Percy told the children.

'Once upon a time,' away off in France, there was a little boy whose father was dead, and whose mother was sick about all the time. He never had good frolics as we do, for he'd no brothers and sisters, and then he had to work hard every day to earn what he could for his poor mother. Now Robin you may be little Pierre, that was his name—and Beth must play she is the poor sick mother.

There was one game that Pierre was never tired of playing all by himself, and that was making b'leve he was a musician in the band—just like his father!

He made a drum, something I s'pose as we've



**"BEAT IT WITH THE STICKS AS PIERRE USED TO DO."**

made ours out of mamma's basket—there Robin, beat it with the sticks as Pierre used to do, and make b'leve you're keeping time to the band of music!

As Pierre was going by a Jew's shop one day, he saw a small accordion in the window—I've folded up this big newspaper to look like one—and when the old man said he might have it for a pair of boots, Pierre quick as a flash, took off his boots, gave them to the old shop keeper, and went dancing home with the accordion under his arm.

Every day after that, Pierre went out with his little accordion, and sang such sweet songs that the people in the streets would crowd about him and fill his cap with pennies.

All these little songs Pierre made up himself, and after awhile he learned how to put the music upon paper—in little black dots, you know, just like that piece of music on the chair.

One day when he was looking out of the window he saw a man just across the street pasting up a big yellow placard.

On it in great blue letters, he read that a noted singer, Madame Malibran, was coming to the city that night.

Looking at his sick mother who was then fast asleep, and remembering that they had not a cent of money left, Pierre took one of the little songs he had written, and went right to the concert hall where Madame Malibran was to sing. Of course she had not come yet, but somebody told him where she was staying; so Pierre started off for the house just as fast as his feet could carry him! I wonder he wasn't afraid to go—but he didn't seem to be, one bit—and when he got to the house he begged so hard to see Madame Malibran that at last the servant let him go up to her room.

You must be Madame Malibran, Madge, and look very much surprised when Pierre—that is, Robin—comes in at the door!

Tucking his cap under his arm, he stepped forward and handed the little roll to Madame Malibran.

“Please kind lady,” he said, “take my little

song and sing it at one of your concerts; my mother is sick and we havn't so much as a sou to buy food or medicine. Perhaps if you should sing my song to-night, some one would be willing to buy it."

Madame Malibran smiled; then she took the roll, and began to hum over the air. It was very simple, but very sweet, and at first she couldn't believe that such a little boy as Pierre had really composed it himself.

But when, after many questions, she felt sure it was all Pierre's work, she promised to sing it that very night.

Next morning, she came herself to the old lodging where Pierre and his mother lived. A certain publisher had offered her a large sum of money for the beautiful little song, for it had won a storm of applause the night before—and now Pierre's fortune was made!

As the years went by he became one of the richest and most popular composers in France, but he always said he owed it all to good, kind, Madame Malibrān.

## EDELWEISS.



O come here, Beth!" exclaimed Madge and Percy and Robin, all in one breath, "we've got lots of flowers, and we want to dress you all up, just like the little Swiss girl that lived among the Alps, and used to sell flowers to the travellers!"

"But who is going to tell the story?" said Beth.

"Why, Aunt Sue, she's come to spend the day, you know, and just think this very same little girl she saw herself when she was in Interlaken?"

"All ready, children?"

It was Aunt Sue who spoke this time, and hastily gathering up their flowers, they hurried into the house, Beth leading the way with a wreath of daisies on her head.

"Once upon a time," began Aunt Sue, "when we were travelling through the Alps, I thought I would make a study of the pretty wild flowers; so I made a little book out of thick blotting paper, and put into it all the new flowers I could find each day. We went in an open carriage from Lauterbrunnen to Grindewold, and many times I begged the driver to stop, so that I could get some dainty, little flower, growing away up in the clefts of the rocks. Crimson flowered moss, blue gentians, and the lovely Alpine roses, we found in great abundance; but in all our journeyings I had not yet been able to procure a single edelweiss. The flower is pure white, just as its name signifies, and grows on barren ridges, almost out of snow and ice.

"We had just passed the great Staubbach waterfall that tumbles down a huge cliff nine hundred and twenty-five feet high, and were drawing near the little village of Wengen, when we heard an Alpine horn in the distance. At first, we only thought how sweet



ONE OF THE MANY CHILD FLOWER VENDERS.

and musical it sounded as the echoes came back from every peak. But when it was repeated again and again, and each time a little louder than before, our driver started suddenly :

“ ‘ Somebody’s in trouble ! ’ ” he exclaimed.

“ Where ? How ? Can’t we get to them ? ” cried everybody in the carriage.

“ It was just possible ; so urging the horses we hurried on in the direction of the now piercing notes. A sudden turn in the road revealed a thrilling sight that makes me shudder now when I think of it !

“ Poised, as it seemed to us in mid-air, but really clinging to a firm branch of pine, hung a little girl who had somehow lost her foot-hold on the narrow ridge above ! All we could hear was the raging mountain torrent just below her, and the shrill note of the little Alpine horn that she still held tightly in one hand. It seemed ages — though it was but a few moments — before our driver, a true mountain climber, had reached the child and

brought her to a place of safety; and it was a brave act, for he risked his own life in doing it.

"She was one of the many child flower venders that you find everywhere on the Alpine roads, and it was a tempting bunch of edelweiss that she was trying to gather, when the treacherous bank gave way. There were still a few flowers left that had somehow clung to her stuff dress when she fell, and these with many gestures she begged us to take.

"None of us could understand the peculiar German dialect she spoke, but through the driver we found out that her home was at Interlaken, and so we took her into the carriage with us. The old father we found at his quaint little shop, polishing garnet stones, and I shall never forget the changing expressions of his face when he heard the whole story. Before night every one in the village knew about it and that year our driver, the good Antonio, received the Montyon Prize."

## JAQUES' PITCHER.



mamma! won't you please let us take that pretty Japanese pitcher of yours to-day. We won't put any water into it, and we'll be ever so careful not to break it."

"Come and hear our story, mamma, and then you will see that nothing else in the house would possibly do as a 'lustration!' pleaded Beth; and so mamma, who seldom refused her "four little beggars," as she playfully called them, any reasonable request, took down from the top shelf of the china closet the rare, old pitcher, and promised the children she would come and hear the story.

"Once upon a time,' that was the very way Captain Crane began the story himself, there was a little boy named Jaques Hugo, whose mother died when he was a baby, and whose father was a sailor. All



**"I GOT THIS PITCHER OUT OF FATHER'S SEA-CHEST."**

the home he ever knew was an old cellar down on the wharves, where Irish Meg, the woman who took care of him, sold snuff, and tobacco, and liquor. It was a dreadful place, and poor little Jaques used to run away whenever he could. One day he wandered off quite a distance, and came to a large building where the door was open, and where he could hear singing.

"Bring the chairs up together, Percy; and Madge, you and Robin get the hymn-books, so that we can play church, for it was the Sailor's Bethel Jaques had wandered into, and it so happened that a great temperance lecturer was to speak on that particular morning. Jaques stood very quietly just at the entrance,—you must be Jaques, Percy, and stand there by the hall door—and as he listened, he grew more and more interested. After that he came quite often to the Bethel, but he said nothing about it at home.

"One day, after sitting a long time in a brown study, he went to an old sea-chest of his

father's, and took out a pitcher something like this one of mamma's. Then he followed the ice-carts that came round through the streets, and picking up a few broken pieces of ice, he carefully washed them, and put them into his pitcher. It was a very hot day, and a great many sailors and workmen down on the wharves came as usual to get a drink at old Meg's cellar. Jaques knew how it would be, and standing just outside he offered every one that came a drink of ice-water from his pretty pitcher. Some of the men laughed, and some began to call him names, but Meg, when she looked out at the door, was so angry that she seized him by the shoulder and would have pushed him down the stone steps, had it not been for a gentleman who just then happened to be passing by. Catching Jaques with one hand and the pitcher with the other, he sent Meg into the house, and bade the boy follow him.

"Jaques was only too glad to obey, and as they walked down the street together, the gen-

tleman asked a great many questions, not only about Jaques himself, but also about the pitcher.

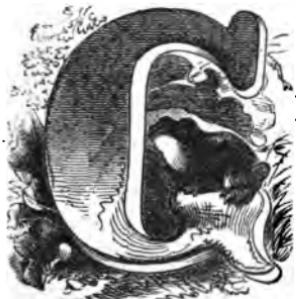
“Jaques told him what he had heard at the temperance meeting, and how he thought that if the thirsty men who came to Meg’s cellar had plenty of good cold water to drink, perhaps they would not want anything stronger.

“‘And so I got this pitcher out of father’s sea-chest, and’—‘stood at your post like a brave little teetotaler!’ said the gentleman; then carefully examining the pitcher, he asked Jaques what he supposed it was worth.

“‘Not much, I reckon, for father’s had it ever since that long cruise of his in the China Sea.’

“But the gentleman knew well the value of old Satsuma ware, and going back to the cellar with Jaques he gave his father a large sum of money for this rare, old pitcher. He knew, too, the value of such a brave temperance boy as little Jaques, and taking him into his employ, he proved a true friend to him all his life.”

## ON A MIDSUMMER DAY.



"**E**T your hats Percy and Robin, and run across the street for Daisy and Walter; we are all going out into the woods this morning, and mamma says we may take our lunch and stay all day!"

It was Madge who announced this "jolly good news," as Percy, in boy fashion, called it; and a half-hour later the merry party of children started off for a day's picnic in the beautiful pine grove that crowned Prospect Hill.

Nurse Gretna led the procession with little Tom clinging fast to her hand, and when the children had run about to their hearts' content, they brought all the pretty wild-flowers they had gathered, and sitting down under the trees, begged nurse to tell them a story.

"Let it be all out doors, please," said Beth; "and something all true," added Madge, who had a great dislike for fairy tales.

"Well, I will see!" said good-natured nursie.  
"Ah! now, I know, it shall be something  
that happened when I was a little girl. 'Once  
on a time,' is that what you say?"

"Yes, you dear, good Gretna, 'once upon a  
time,' that is just the way we begin all our  
stories, and we would like better than anything  
else, to hear what you used to do when you were  
no bigger than we!" said Beth, and all the chil-  
dren chimed in, "Oh, yes! do, do!"

"Well, it was in the old country, when we  
lived close by the Thuringian Forest, and one  
summer morning just like this, my mother said  
to me, 'Gretna, I see your father has forgotten  
his lunch pail,' (he had gone, you see children, to  
cut down trees in the forest,) 'and I fear he will  
be faint before night; now you know the path  
through the woods, Gretna, and I want you to  
put on your hat, take the pail, and hurry after  
him as fast as you can!'"

"I was only too glad to go, and throwing  
down my knitting, I kissed mother and started  
off.



**"I GREW SO TIRED I HAD TO SIT DOWN AND REST."**

"Oh, how beautiful it was in that old forest!"

"Was it anything like this, Gretna?" asked Percy.

"A little like it, but the trees were darker and older and taller; I thought I knew the way to the clearing where father was at work, but a great, bright butterfly lighted on a flower close by me, and trying to catch it, I wandered out of the path. Then I got more and more bewildered; once in a while I thought I could hear the blows of an axe not far away, but when I followed the direction of the sounds, all was still again. I don't know how many miles I walked, but at last I grew so tired I had to sit down and rest. It was near a little stream of water, I remember, and I took off my shoes and stockings and bathed my feet, that were already blistered from the long tramp. There was a little bird came down to drink as I sat there, and when I spoke to it, instead of flying away, it came and lighted on my hand. I was very much astonished as you may suppose but when

I looked more closely at the bird, I saw it was not a wood-thrush as I first thought, but somebody's pet bulfinch.

"All at once it flashed across my mind that I must be near the hut of an old hermit I had heard about. He had a strange fancy for birds, and a wonderful power in taming them.

"Sometimes he would bring to our village a dozen or so at a time and sell them; but it was only when hunger stared him in the face that he could be induced to part with his pets.

"Well, I was glad enough, you may be sure, when the next moment I saw the old hermit himself. He knew the whole forest from beginning to end, and soon put me in the right path. It was almost sundown, however, before I reached father, for I had wandered many miles away.

"'My poor, tired little Gretna!' that was all he said when I told him how I lost the way, and then I remember he caught me up in his great, strong arms and carried me all the way home."

## BY THE SEA.



T was Beth's birthday, and Uncle Joe had invited all the children to take a sail with him down the harbor.

Such a happy group, I verily believe, never set sail before in the pretty little yacht "Sea Bird," and when they

drew near Nantasket shore, and Uncle Joe told them they might have a long stroll on the beach, their delight knew no bounds.

"Let's give three cheers!" exclaimed Percy, eagerly.

"And let's play we are a band of explorers just landing on a new-found shore," said imaginative Beth.

"All right, Miss Christopher Columbus," laughed practical Madge, "but the first thing I'm going to do, is to fill my lunch basket 'chuck full' of Irish moss to make some blanc-mange when we get home."



**"WHAT A GRAND TIME THEY HAD THERE ON THE BEACH!"**

"And I want some pretty shells and some smooth white pebbles to play 'jack-stones,'" put in little Robin.

"Well, children," said kind Uncle Joe, "I'm going to lay anchor here, and try my luck at fishing for a couple of hours; and, meanwhile, you can hurrah, explore, and pick up just as much rubbish as you please."

Oh, what a grand time they had there on the beach!

Uncle Joe laughingly declared they frightened away all the fish, and it was not long before he left his lines and joined the children on the shore.

Robin ran up to meet him with a great shell he had found, and this is the story Uncle Joe declared it told him when he held it close to his ear.

"'Once upon a time,' many miles out at sea, there was a tiny boat, no bigger than my hand; it was painted a rose-pink, outside, and had a pearl lining that shone in the sunlight with

every color of the rainbow ; the sails were of a brilliant purple, and their texture was finer than silk.

"Oh Uncle Joe!" interrupted Madge, "are you sure it is a *true* story you're telling us?"

"Just as true as true can be, for you see I saw it all myself ;" replied Uncle Joe with the utmost gravity.

"And one of the strangest things about this little boat," he continued, "was the way in which it was built ; it took a number of years to complete it, and the builder lived on board all the time."

"But what a little man he must have been, Uncle Joe, if the whole boat was no bigger than your hand!" said Percy with wide-open eyes.

"Yes, he was hardly larger than a pea at first, but he grew every year with the boat, and built a spiral stair-case inside, so that he could climb up and always keep his head above water."

"Oh, Uncle Joe! you puzzle us more and more!" exclaimed Madge ; "do tell us the name

of this wonderful little creature, if there ever was such a being outside of fairy-land!"

"Why, where is your natural history, children, if you have never heard before of the chambered nautilus; I cannot show you the little builder myself, for he died long ago, but when we get home you shall see the veritable



boat I have been telling you about. It was wrecked one day upon a coral reef, and when I was sailing among the South Sea Islands, I picked up the beautiful shell and brought it home for my cabinet of curiosities."

## ST. CUTHBERT'S BEADS.



T was another of those never-to-be-forgotten days at the beach, and while Percy and Robin amused themselves by digging for clams, Madge and Beth picked up all the pretty mosses they could find, to press upon rice-paper. In trying to get a bit of delicate crimson moss, Madge drew to shore an immense piece of sea-weed, and as it was all covered with tiny white shells, it made a curious rattling sound as she dragged the long strip across the beach.

"Heigho! Is St. Cuthbert forging his beads?" said Uncle Joe.

"Why, what do you mean?" said Percy.

"Did you never hear of old St. Cuthbert and his hammer and anvil on the island of Lindisfarne? No? Well then, if you will bring me that long strip of sea-weed, and sit down quietly beside me I will tell you about it.

“‘Once upon a time,’ there was a fearful storm on the Northumbrian coast. It was long, long after the death of the good old Bishop, but in a sudden flash of lightning, one of the simple country-folk exclaimed, ‘I see Bishop Cuthbert himself, sitting upon the topmost rock of the island Landisfarne, and hammering out beads for the faithful! ’

“Of course it was just a fancy of his excited brain, but next morning when the storm was over, the Whitby fishermen found the shore all covered with curious little beads.”

“Why, Uncle Joe, how strange! where in the world did they come from?” exclaimed Madge.

“Look at this piece of sea-weed again,” said Uncle Joe; “do you notice the peculiar form of each little shell attached to it?”

“Why, yes, they all have a hole right through the middle!” said Percy.

“Well, children, now you will understand St. Cuthbert’s beads, for they are nothing more nor less than shells, similar to these, but somewhat



"MADGE DREW TO SHORE AN IMMENSE PIECE OF SEAWEED."

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larger. The little creatures who inhabit them are called *crinoids*, and belong to the same family as the sea-stars and sea-urchins. When alive they look more like plants than animals, for the head seems like a blossom and the five arms like so many branches ; the latter are made up of little flexible rings, that are all jointed together, and fastened at the base to the bottom of the sea. Now after a great storm, these little crinoids are uprooted in countless numbers and thrown upon the shore ; the rings, or joints, are separated, just like those tiny shells we found amongst the sea-weed ; and to this day the children of the Northumbrian fisherman always call them 'St. Cuthbert's Beads.'

"Sometimes these rings are no larger than a pea ; then, again, they are the size of a ten-cent piece, and frequently three or four beads will be found fastened together ; indeed, I have often counted a dozen in the space of an inch.

"Come to the library when we get home," said Uncle Joe, "and I will read you what Scott says about St. Cuthbert in Marmion."

## THE CLOTH OF GOLD.



H Madge! it's another real *out doors day*," exclaimed Beth, one bright June morning. "Do let's take a run down by the brook before study hour."

"In a minute!" said Madge, as she ran into the nursery to get a basket.

It was only a short distance to the noisy little brook that tumbled down over "pic-nic rock," and then played hide-and-seek among the alder bushes in the meadow; and Madge and Beth, after filling hands and basket full of wild-flowers, sat down under the great willow tree and began the old-time "buttercup-play."

"Sit still, Beth, and let me see if you really like butter," said Madge, as she tucked a great golden blossom under Beth's chin.

"Pooh, it don't show a bit; yes it does though!" added Madge, as Beth suddenly changed her position and caught the whole reflection on her chubby neck.

"Well, it tells the truth, then, for I do like butter; but I was thinking, Madge, as you held up the buttercup, of a little yellow flower that Mademoiselle told me about the other day; I think she said it grew in Germany, and that people there called it 'the key of heaven.'"

"What a pretty name! Does it look like a buttercup, I wonder?"

"Let's take a bunch to Mademoiselle and ask her," said Beth; and hastily gathering a few fresh flowers, they caught up their basket and started for home.

Mademoiselle nodded "Yes," as she took the pretty bunch, with a bright smile of thanks; and this is the story she told the children after the morning's study hour.

"'Once upon a time,' when we were living in Alsace, I went with my brother to see a poor little cripple who had a wonderful talent for drawing.

"A pencil in his fingers seemed to fly, as if by magic, and from the simple wild-flowers that grew in the woods near by, he would make the



**"LET ME SEE IF YOU REALLY LIKE BUTTER."**

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loveliest designs I ever saw, for wall-papers and cretonnes.

“One time, a wealthy manufacturer who had just bought a beautiful chateau, and wished to furnish it in a unique manner, offered a large sum of money to any one who would design the richest and most tasteful pattern for satin brocatelle.

“A great many noted artists sent him pattern after pattern, but none of them quite satisfied him.

“At last came a tiny roll, with a simple monogram in the corner, that no one recognized; but the design was so faultlessly beautiful, that the merchant at once exclaimed, ‘I will seek no further, this is just what I want!’

“It was the little cripple’s, and he had drawn his design from the little golden flower, so like your yellow buttercup, that the Germans call ‘the key of heaven.’

“And when the pattern was wrought at the loom, it was so wonderfully rich and beautiful, that they called it ‘The Cloth of Gold.’”

## A CUP OF TEA.



T was a rainy day, and their mamma had promised the children they should have a "make-b'lieve" party, and use for the first time, the pretty little tea-set Uncle Joe had brought them from China.

Nurse Gretna brought little Tom and sat at the table with them, but everybody missed Percy, who had gone into the city with papa.

An invitation was sent to Uncle Joe, and to the great delight of the children, he came just as they were ready to pour out the tea.

As he took the tiny cup in his hand, he asked Madge if it was *Souchong*, *Ponchong*, *Oolong* or *Congou*?

Mamma laughed, and said it was a very harmless form of "*Cambric* tea," but he should have a cup of genuine "*Gunpowder*" if he wished.

That led to a long talk about the different kinds of tea, and this is what Uncle Joe said he saw "once upon a time," when he was in China.

"It was about the middle of April, and I went with one of the natives into a large field where the tea-plants were growing. The leaves were very young and tender then, and covered with a downy substance that made them look almost like flowers. This first picking of the new leaves makes the nicest quality of tea in the market; it is called '*Pekoe*' when black, and '*Gunpowder*' when green."

"But does black tea and green tea grow on different kinds of plants," asked Madge.

"No, they are made from the same sort of leaves, only the black is exposed longer to the air in drying or 'curing.' The tea-plant belongs to the same family as your pretty camelia bush, and the blossom is very much like it, only it is single and, of course, much smaller. In May and July, the natives pick off the leaves again, but the older they are, the poorer is the quality of tea.



"THE 'MAKE B'LIEVE' PARTY."

"If you unroll a tea-leaf when it is moistened, you will find it rather longer than a camelia leaf, and considerably thinner. Holding it up to the light you will notice how the large veins loop together close to the edge of the leaf, for this is a marked peculiarity of the tea-plant, and is an excellent test of the genuine leaf. Frequently hawthorn, poplar and wild plum leaves are intermixed with the true tea leaves, but they can always be detected in this way.

"Sometimes aromatic flowers, like the tea-olive and cape-jasmine, are laid with the leaves to give them a peculiar flavor, but they are always sifted out before the tea is packed into boxes; these 'scented teas,' as they are called, form a specialty in the Canton trade.

"The Chinese never drink milk or sugar in their tea, and have a peculiar way of drawing it that brings out the full strength. In Russia, I remember, lemons are always served with tea, and in Switzerland I tasted a strong flavor of cinnamon in my cup."

"But how do the English drink their tea, Uncle Joe?" asked Beth.

"Just as we do, now, with milk and sugar; but I must tell you how a certain English lady once prepared a pound of tea for her intimate friends.

"It was just after the Portuguese and Dutch had introduced the new luxury into Great Britain, and as it was then valued at twenty-five, thirty and fifty dollars a pound, the taste of tea was little known outside of London.

"This lady, who lived some distance in the country, had a pound sent her from the city, and the next evening she invited a number of friends to come to her house and share the treat.

"But it required a deal of politeness on the part of her guests to conceal their disgust for the new dish of tea they had heard so highly praised. In her generosity and ignorance, the good lady had boiled the whole pound for hours, and served the leaves with salt and butter, just like a dish of dandelion greens!"

## POLLY HILL'S DUCKLINGS.



"YOU need not look so jealous, Carlo, you would n't touch these crumbs if you could reach them!"

A low growl from the kennel, and a piping "quack, quack," from the little ducklings, was the only answer Beth received, but she kept on talking just as if they all understood.

"I should think you would be ashamed, Carlo, when I gave you such a great plate of beef-bones this noon ; but then dicky ducklings, some people never are satisfied, no matter how much you give them."

"And then again, my little girl, there are others who take everything with a thankful heart: did you ever hear about old Polly Hill, and her ducklings ?"

"Never, mamma, but tell me, please."

"Well, you shall have it for your 'once upon



YOU NEEDN'T LOOK SO JEALOUS, CARLO."

a time,' story to-day; call Madge, Percy and Robin, after you have fed the ducklings, and we will all go down into the summer-house."

"Oh thank you, mamma!" and Beth, shaking the last vestige of crumbs out of her apron, hurried back to the house to tell the rest of the children.

Ten minutes later, they were all sitting in a circle around mamma, looking for all the world like so many little Turks.

"'Once upon a time'" she began, "there was a farmer who had two sons and one daughter. They lived in a rambling old house not far from the little red school-house, and it was just here I first met Polly, for that was the daughter's name. She was a merry, rosy-cheeked girl, and so good-tempered and generous, that everybody liked her; we were always good friends at school, but after your grandfather moved away from Milton, I lost sight of Polly for a number of years. Then I heard of her father's death,

and the sale of the old farm, but it was not until a long time after, that I knew how unjustly Polly had been treated.

“ One of her brothers, who left the farm when he was a boy, and afterwards studied law in the neighboring city, proved to be a very grasping, dishonest man; he managed some way to get the property into his own hands, and when the division was made, it was found that Polly and the younger brother, who was almost an idiot, had nothing but a few acres of land down in what they called the ‘bog pasture.’ ”

“ Everybody in the little village was very indignant, but nothing could be done unless they went to law about it, and that Polly declared she would never do.

“ But she was very willing to work, and as she was handy with her needle, everybody was glad to give her all the sewing they could; and in this way she managed, for some time, to support her poor, simple-minded brother and herself.

“ Nobody ever heard her complain, she was always singing over her work, and I doubt if

there was a happier person than Polly in the whole village.

"One day, in taking home a piece of sewing she had just completed, Polly found the shortest way would be to take a foot path through the 'bog pasture.'

"She had almost forgotten how large a part of it really belonged to her, for everybody regarded it as just so much waste land; but a bright thought came to Polly that day.

"A long trailing branch of the cranberry vine caught in her dress as she hurried along, and down in the frog pond she saw a number of ducks paddling about to their hearts' content.

"If her patch of ground wouldn't raise corn and potatoes, why not try a crop of cranberries and ducks?

"Well, that was just what Polly did.

"With a deal of labor and trouble she had a large part of the swamp properly drained and laid out into cranberry fields; and then her ducks, why there were none like them for miles around!

"After a few years, Polly had made enough money from her 'bog pasture' to build a house, only a little cottage to be sure, but then it is one



of the cosiest of homes, and here Polly and her poor brother are living now.

"Some day when we ride over to Milton, I will take you there to call."

## UNDER THE SEA.



OOK, Madge and Beth, we are all ready to dive!"

An odd little couple, truly, with paper masques, pillow-slips and sheets put on in the most marvelous style.

But Percy and Robin had been reading recently about the pearl fisheries, and were eager to tell the story with their own illustrations.

"You'll have to take off that masque while you're talking, Percy," exclaimed Madge, "or we never can understand what you say!"

"All right, I'm going to be the little boy Hudah, with his dog, presently; but in the first place, I want to show Robin just how to dive!"

And with a sudden spring from the old sofa, both boys landed upon the rug at the farther side of the play-room.

"There! now we are at the bottom of the



**HUDAH AND HIS LITTLE DOG.**

sea!" exclaimed Percy, "and oh, such a bank of pearl oysters as we've found here!"

"Indeed," said Madge, "pray tell us what they are like."

"Don't ask a pearl diver when he is under the water; what could he tell you in fifty seconds?"

"Whew! what a dive that was!" exclaimed Robin, "but now we're back again on the sofa, (that's our boat, you know) do hurry up, Percy, and tell us the story."

"Well, this is what I read: 'Once upon a time' in Ceylon, there was a noted diver who had a little son. His name was Hudah, and I think he was about as old as you, Robin.

"Every time his father went out with the pearl fishers, he took Hudah with him, for he wanted him to learn all about the trade; and then when the shells were washed, Hudah's wonderfully keen eyes would often find small seed-pearls in the sand, that nobody else had noticed.

"One day, a number of boats went out to-

gether; they look somewhat like canoes, and each boat carries five diving-stones, with two divers to each stone.

" Hudah's father was among them, and, as usual, he took his little boy with him.

" For six hours they worked constantly, some of the divers staying as long as two or three minutes under water; and when the morning's fishing was over, it was found that Hudah's father had brought up three thousand shells from the oyster bed."

" I wonder if the oysters we eat," interrupted Robin, " ever have pearls in them; sometimes I've picked out little stones just as round and hard and white as homeopathic pills. I thought may be they were cooked pearls!"

" Oh no," said Percy, whose reading of the day before was very fresh in mind; " what they call the pearl oyster, is really a kind of mussel, which is very seldom used for food.

" But to go back to Hudah and his father; it would seem as if his fortune was made, but as divers are only allowed to keep one hundred

and thirty-four out of every two thousand shells they bring up, he did not have so very many after all. Then it is never safe to reckon upon more than one pearl to every thirty shells, and often the pearls themselves are not worth picking out of the smaller, half-grown mussels.

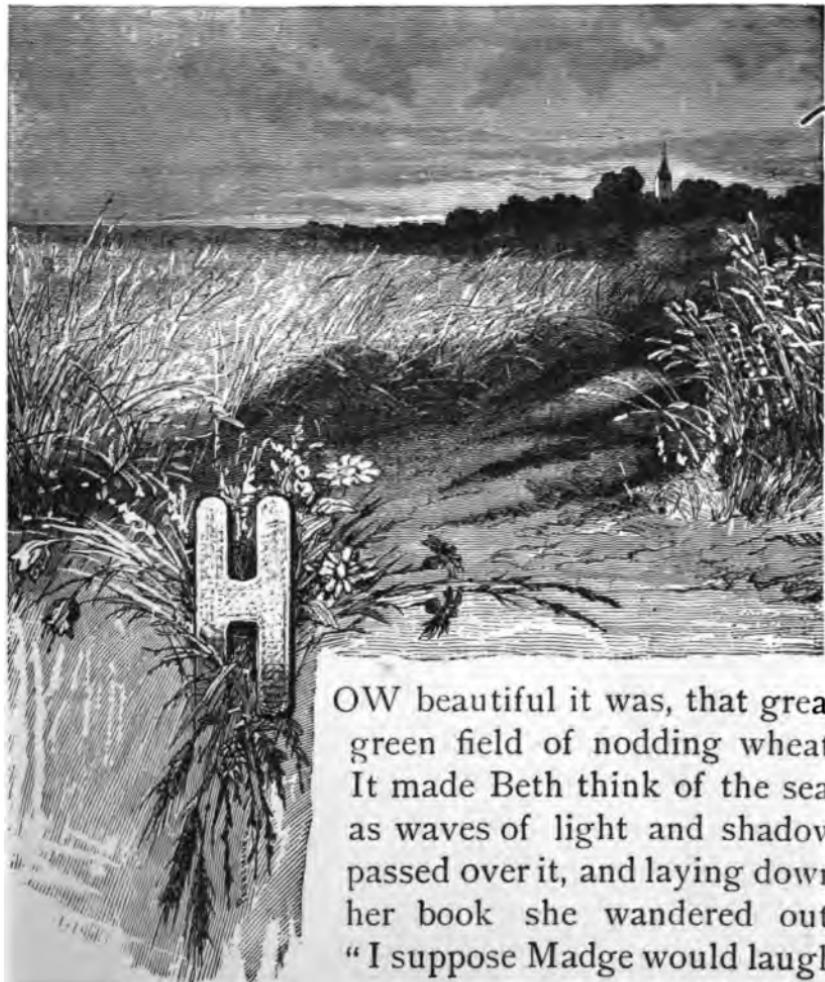
" Hudah and his little dog had watched the divers very intently that morning.

" As the shells were brought up and a few of them opened in the boats, the boy noticed that the rougher looking and more deformed shells always contained the best pearls.

" 'Will you give me that one, father?' he said, pointing to one of the most rugged and ugly in the whole heap.

" Nodding assent, the diver plunged again into the water, but when he came to the surface, he found little Hudah surrounded by an excited crowd. He had opened with his knife the coveted shell, and there fast entangled in the beard of the mussel, lay a huge black pearl! It was a very rare specimen and valued at a hundred sovereigns!"

## THE LITTLE ARGONAUT.



OW beautiful it was, that great green field of nodding wheat. It made Beth think of the sea, as waves of light and shadow passed over it, and laying down her book she wandered out. "I suppose Madge would laugh

at me," she said to herself, "but I'm going to 'make b'lieve' I'm Jason going away over the sea to find the golden fleece."

Beth had just been reading about the Argonauts, and the story was very fresh in her mind, so taking a little tin dipper, "for the golden cup you know," as she whispered to an imaginary Telamon, she poured a few drops of water upon the waves of wheat, and called upon the wind, the sea, the days and the nights, to help her during the long voyage.

Three black crows that suddenly flapped their wings with a loud "caw, caw, caw," over Beth's head, she called the Harpies, and a long stick that she picked up to drive them away, answered very well for the sword of Zetes.

"How fast we are sailing now!" she said to herself, as moving her arms like oars, she brushed through the long rows of wheat.

"Ah! these must be the Cyanean Rocks," she exclaimed, as something under foot suddenly stopped her progress.

"The story says that they opened and closed



JUST A POOR LITTLE FRIGHTENED HARE.

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just like a pair of scissors, but if I am an Argonaut they will surely stay open till I pass through!"

And with a lofty air, little Miss "Jason" steered past the two big stumps, and came over safely into the open sea beyond.

"Oh dear, what a storm! we shall surely be wrecked now!" she exclaimed as a sudden gust of wind blew off her hat.

But the "top-sail," as Beth called her lost sun-down, was soon recovered from the briny deep, and for awhile nothing further interrupted the course of the "Argo."

"I must steer due east, or I shall never reach Colchis," she said, as looking up she saw the afternoon sun was fast sinking in the west.

Hark! what was that?

Beth, in her fright, suddenly forgot all about Jason, the Argo, and the golden fleece. "Oh, if Madge was only with me!" she thought to herself.

It was such an odd, rustling, grumbling

sound, now here, now there, and not a thing could Beth see.

What if it should be the veritable dragon that guarded the golden fleece?

Pooh! this was altogether too much of a "make b'lieve" play; at any rate she would have a stone, just as Jason did, to throw at the armed men; yes, and she would pick some of the weeds among the wheat, and dip them into her golden cup; it was a drink of some kind like this, that put the dragon to sleep in the story, and —

But Beth's meditations were suddenly interrupted. There was another rustle, a spring, a bound, and the "Argo" ran aground!

It was not a wreck, however, nothing save the little tin dipper was seriously injured, and when Beth opened her eyes, she saw, not the dragon, not the golden fleece, but just a poor little frightened hare.

There it stood, not a yard from where she had fallen, looking at her with great, round eyes, and ears raised to their utmost height,

"Oh, you dear little Bunnie!" exclaimed Beth,  
"do let me take you right up in my arms!"

But having satisfied his curiosity, and frightened now in his turn, the hare made a sudden



dive into the wheat, and all was quiet sailing again for the little Argonaut.

The charm was broken, however, the magic ship had vanished, and tired little Beth put off till another day all further search for the "Golden Fleece."

## A FLOCK OF PIGEONS.



HERE were just thirty of them — fan-tails, pouters, tumblers, ring-doves, and modest drab beauties without any name in particular, but all equally dear

to Percy's heart.

Papa had showed him how to put little windows and shelves on a part of the hen-coop for them, and every morning he and Robin fed them in the yard below.

"What should you think, children, of feeding thousands of pigeons, all at once," said papa.

"I shouldn't mind that, I should just like it!" exclaimed Percy, "only I'd need a lot of corn."

"Well, there is no lack of corn for the pigeons of St. Mark's square, for the legacy given years ago by some kind-hearted Italian, provides an ample meal for them every day."

"Do tell us more about them, papa," said Robin; "are they tame, and will they eat out of anybody's hand just as ours do?"

"When I saw them fed, a young girl, not much larger than our Madge, stood in the centre of St. Mark's square, and some of the pigeons flew down and took pieces of bread from her mouth, while others nibbled at the corn she held in her hands."

"Others lighted on those great bronze pedestals in the square, which are twenty feet high, and look like great candle-sticks with the tall masts for candles."

"Is the square all covered with green grass, like Boston Common?" asked Percy.

"Oh, no," said papa; "it is paved with broad, flat slabs and at one end you can see the beautiful Church of St. Mark, with its mosque-like cupolas, and the Campanile or bell-tower, which is three hundred and twenty feet high. When the great clock with its huge sun-dial in blue and gold strikes the hour of two, the pigeons begin to come in clouds until the whole square is black with them."

"How do they know papa, just when to come?" said Percy.



IN ST. MARK'S SQUARE.

"I remember it was about twelve o'clock when our gondola reached the square, and we waited there until two, just to see this feeding of the pigeons. But there was a deal to see and do, meanwhile, for we went quite to the top of the Campanile, and not by steps as you might suppose, but by a long series of zig-zags. The view from the top looking down upon Venice and her islands seemed like a fairy picture. Then when the pigeons came, it seemed even more like wonderland.

"Possibly they have learned what two strokes of the bell mean; at all events, they are never one moment tardy, no matter whether their dinner is delayed or not. Oh, such a scurrying and whirring as they make there in the square, till the corn is all distributed!"

"Are the pigeons of all kinds and colors, just like ours?" asked Robin.

"I didn't see any pouters or fan-tails, but quantities of brown and drab, and grey, and white. You know it is not the pet pigeons that are fed in this way."

"What a pretty sight it must be, to see them all coming down like a cloud!" exclaimed Percy.



"Yes," said papa, "it made me think of that beautiful verse in Isaiah. But look, children, your own little doves are calling loudly for some more corn."

## QUEEN OF THE ROSES.



SEE what a lovely basket of roses Aunt Sue has sent us!" exclaimed Beth, holding a great red Jaqueminot up to her face, and scattering Bonsiliens, Marechal Niels, and Nyphetos buds all over the table.

"Oh, *oh, oh!*" shouted Madge, Percy, and Robin, each seizing a handful.

"Let's play we're away off in France," said Beth, "and have been invited to the 'Fete of Roses!'"

"Why, what's that?" asked Percy.

"Oh, it's a great festival they have every year on the eighth of June in Salency. Bring the big atlas, Robin, and I'll show you just where it is, on the map."

"There it is, I see!" exclaimed Percy, "but I wonder they happened to have the Fete there



HOLDING A GREAT, RED JACQUEMINOT UP TO HER FACE.

and nowhere else in France; don't the roses grow just as well about Paris and Lyons?"

"I suppose so, but you see it was St. Medard the Bishop of Noyen, who first thought about having these festivals."

"St. Medard?" exclaimed Madge, "why, I do believe it's the same old Bishop that Mademoiselle was telling me about the other day!"

"I shouldn't wonder," replied Beth, "but what did she say about him?"

"Why, it was on that rainy day, I was so disappointed because I could not go into the city; it was the eighth day of June, don't you remember?" And Mademoiselle said with a laugh,

'S'il pleut le jour de St. Medard,  
Il pleut quarante jours plus tard.'

"Afterward she told me a curious story about this same St. Medard. She said he was out in the field one hot day in summer, when a sudden shower came up; all at once a great eagle flew down from a neighboring cliff, and began to flutter about his head. He was startled at first,

but soon discovered that the eagle was only trying to shelter him from the rain, and under this strange umbrella, he walked all the way home."

"How I would liked to have seen him!" exclaimed Percy.

"Well, I think he was fond of children," said Beth, "for it must have been the same one that invited all the young people of Salency to that first great Festival of Roses.

"Tell us more about it Beth, before we begin our play."

"Well, after all the children had come together, Bishop Medard called by name a little girl among them who had done a very brave act the year before. Then he told the other children they must make a wreath of the loveliest roses they could find, and crown her.

"This they did very gladly, for everybody loved little Therese whom the bishop declared was 'Queen of the Roses.'

"After that, they had just such a festival every year at Salency; and the garland of flow-

ers was always given to the boy or girl who had done the most heroic deed during the year."

"But I don't see how children could be expected to do anything very wonderful," said Madge.

"Oh, I don't think that was what St. Medard meant, for one little girl received the garland of roses just because she had borne a long and painful sickness so patiently; and another was crowned because, at the risk of her own life, she rescued her baby brother from a burning house."

"Let's play, Madge, that Robin is in great danger, fallen into the river, for instance, and then you rush in, just as you really did one day, and draw him out!"

"There! now we must call you our queen, and Robin—you and Percy pick out the very prettiest buds you can find in the whole basket and I'll make a wreath of roses for queen Madge!"

"You must sing that little song, too, that you learned at the Kindergarten, and then we'll crown her 'Queen of the Roses.'"

## THE RESCUE OF THE PHILLIS.



TILL another day by the sea, and Percy, with pantaloons rolled up, bag and net slung across his shoulder, and an old cap, with visor drawn over his eyes, wandered up and down the beach.

"I'm a jolly tar, Madge, just home from a long cruise, don't you see?"

"You look more like a forlorn little emigrant," laughed his unimaginative sister, "but it is fun, isn't it, to have on our old suits and run about wherever we please!"

"Do you see that old man mending the big boat over there? Well, he's been telling me the best 'once upon a time' story, you ever heard."

"What was it all about?" asked Madge, Beth, and Robin, with wide-awake curiosity.

"If you really want to hear, I think we had better get into this empty boat, for it is quite a long story.

“ I asked him first if it was his own boat he was mending ; he said no, but that he had taken many a long cruise in the ‘ Phillis.’

“ Then he began to tell me about the dreadful storm they had ‘ once upon a time ’ down in the bay of Fundy ; the Phillis is one of those small schooners, you know, that are built just for fishermen, and whole fleets of them sail off together for the Grand Banks.”

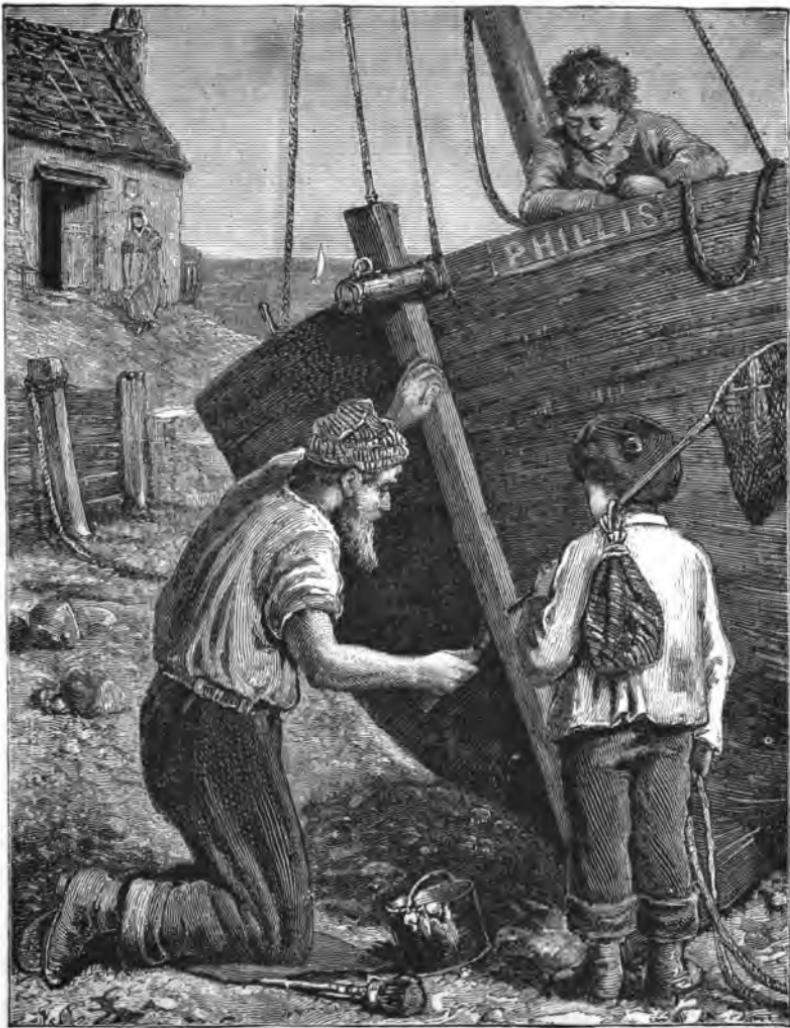
“ I can see half a dozen now, just starting from the cove ! ” exclaimed Robin.

“ Yes, sure enough ! and I shouldn’t wonder if they were going to catch cod, just like the Phillis.

“ But I hope they wont have so hard a time as she did. It was only the third day out, when one of the fishermen noticed a strange-looking cloud just above the horizon.

“ It rolled up just like a column of black smoke, and they had hardly time to take down the sails before the wind began to blow.

“ Then great hailstones, as big as pigeon’s eggs, came pelting down, and both masts were



**"I ASKED HIM FIRST IF IT WAS HIS OWN BOAT."**

soon covered with icicles, although it was a day in the middle of August.

"They were not very far from land, but that made it all the worse for them, because there were rocks near by, upon which the Phillis might founder.

"The people on the shore came down in crowds and watched the little schooner as it tossed on the waves, but nobody dared to venture out even in a life-boat.

"It seemed every moment as if the vessel must go down, for the storm was increasing, and then, too, it was growing darker and darker.

"Suddenly a great Newfoundland dog plunged into the water.

"This gave everybody fresh courage, and the owner of the dog, seizing some heavy cable that lay on the beach, called him back and put one end of it into his mouth.

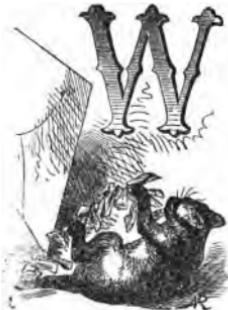
"The brave dog seemed to understand what they wanted him to do, and instantly swam out to the boat with the long rope they had already fastened securely to the shore.

“ By this means the lives of all on board were



saved, and the Phillis, instead of going to pieces on the rocks was hauled up for repairs.”

## A STRAW HAT.



HY Percival Treadwell, whatever in the world are you going to do with all those hats?"

"Wait a minute Madge, and you'll see," answered Percy, at the same time perching hat No. 7 upon the top of papa's cane.

And a curious array it was, with Beth's sundown leading the procession, followed by Madge's Fayal, Robin's sailor hat, a discarded Dunstable of mamma's, baby Tom's Leghorn, and an old Panama braid that Percy had found up in the attic.

"You see," he explained "Mademoiselle has been telling me how the little boys and girls in Italy, and in England, too, help to make these different kinds of hats, and I thought it would be interesting to have some illustrations.

"I've found out on the map just where all the places are, but it was in Leghorn that Mademoiselle saw, 'once upon a time,' the little Antonio she has been telling me about.



**"LITTLE ANTONIO WOVE THEM IN AND OUT."**

"He lived in a little hut just out of the city, and his father used to raise whole fields of a kind of bearded wheat that makes a very nice, fine straw for braiding.

"These Leghorn farmers sow their grain very close together, and pull the stalks while the ear is soft and milky, for they don't care to harvest anything but the straw.

"After it is gathered they scatter it loosely all over the fields, so that the dew, the sun and the air may season and bleach it.

"This part of the work little Antonio always enjoyed, for he liked to be out of doors; but after the straw had been thoroughly dried, stacked, and whitened with sulphur, there came long days and evenings when Antonio and his brothers and sisters used to get very tired of making the countless yards of plait.

"If you look at little Tom's Leghorn hat you'll see that the straws are all whole, not split as in Beth's sundown, and to work them in nicely, they have to be moistened with water.

"Of course, a hat made of whole straws is

ever so much stronger and better than one made of split straws, and then, too, the plaits can be interwoven so that you can't tell where they join.

"Mademoiselle cut out of paper these thirteen narrow strips to show me just how little Antonio wove them in and out, to form the pretty Leghorn plait.

"He had to wash his hands very often while he was working, for the fine straw easily becomes soiled unless one is very careful, and for that reason the Italians always like to do their braiding in the spring before it is hot and dusty.

"The coils of plait are wound in a spiral way, and when the edges are joined together they make those big Leghorn flats that are used so much for shade hats.

"'Once upon a time,' when duties on all imported articles were very high, hat dealers in England used to collect a great many poor women and children, and give them free pass-

ages to Leghorn. Here, after tucking away their old bonnets and hats in pockets and satchels, they would each be provided with a new Leghorn to wear home.

“ Day after day the same thing would be repeated, until the English hat dealers were furnished with all the head gear they wanted.

“ After awhile the unjust duties were taken away and then there was no need of sending the poor peasants to wear home those foreign hats.

“ In Dunstable, St. Albans and Luton, in England, Mademoiselle says they can make hats now, that look almost exactly like the Leghorn, although they are not so strong; and then there are ever so many pretty plaits like this Fayal of Madge's, and Robin's sailor hat that are made of larger, coarser straws.

“ In England, women and children do the braiding at home and bring their rolls of plait to the straw markets that are held right out in open street.”

"Don't they make any hats here in America?" asked Robin.

"Why, yes," said Madge, "for when mamma and I were in Florida last winter we saw the southern women making palmetto hats."

"At Jacksonville there is a large factory where the sewing and pressing is done; and one day when we were out riding, I noticed ever so many women and children in the fields, stripping off the palmetto leaves."

"I don't see how they could reach to do that," said Percy, "unless they climbed up into the trees."

"Oh, it was easy enough," answered Madge, "for the palmettos don't grow much higher than your head—that is, the kind that they strip for weaving into hats; after they have gathered a large quantity of the palmetto leaves, they cut them up into even strands; these they tie up in bundles, and hang out in the sun to bleach. The pretty grasses, too, that they use for trimming on the Florida hats, we saw growing in the fields all about Jacksonville."

## THE HALL-I-TH'-WOOD WHEEL.



WO dainty muslin dresses had come from the city; one with a delicate pink ground all covered with tiny, white rosebuds was for black-eyed Madge, and the other with its pretty forget-me-not pattern just suited golden-haired Beth.

While mamma was busily at work upon the airy, fairy-like material, she asked the children if they knew how and where it was made.

"In factories, I suppose," said Madge, "but don't all these fine muslins come from away over the seas?"

"Once upon a time," answered mamma, everything of this kind was imported from India, and even Arkwright's rollers and the spinning jennies that Hargreaves invented, could draw out no yarn that was fine enough for muslin fabrics.



**WITH HIS BOOKS AND VIOLIN.**

" But in Lancashire, England, a hundred years ago, there was a certain little Samuel who had what the country-folk call, 'a long head.'

" His mother, a poor widow, sold butter and honey and elderberry wine to eke out a livelihood, and when Samuel was sixteen years of age, she told him he must earn his living by doing, at home, a certain amount of spinning each day.

" This was a very common practice in all the farmers' families throughout Lancashire, for the factories near by furnished employment to many hands outside the mills.

" Samuel did his work very faithfully, but oftentimes the yarn would break and he was obliged to spend a deal of time in joining the threads.

" He was fond of reading, and had a passionate love for music; his evenings were spent at a night school where he studied mathematics, and during his leisure moments he managed to

construct a violin, upon which he learned to play very finely.

"After the day's spinning was over, you might have seen him trudging off into the fields with his books and his violin, for there was nothing he enjoyed better; but when the thread broke his work was delayed, and he knew there could be no music or reading until his stint was done.

"So he tried to invent something that should prevent this constant breaking of the yarn; he said nothing about it, but got some pieces of wood and a few tools with the money he earned by playing his violin in the village orchestra.

"It was a long time before he got his 'mule' into running order, but as soon as he sent to the factories the yarn he had spun with it, everybody noticed how much finer and better the threads appeared than any others in the market.

"The old house where he lived was called the 'Hall-i-th'-Wood,' and crowds of people came to find out Crompton's secret.

“ Old manufacturers saw, at once that if such fine, firm yarn could be procured in abundance, they would no longer need to send to India for muslin fabrics.

“ But Samuel was too poor to procure a patent, and so he tried to keep the secret.

“ There was, however, a greater demand for the yarn than he could possibly supply; and at last he gave his ‘mule’ to the public for a sum of money less than the cost of the original model!

“ Then all the Lancashire mills began in good earnest to spin and weave these delicate muslins that have given the whole county a world-wide reputation.

“ I fear poor Samuel never received his honest dues, for he had a hard struggle all his life to make both ends meet; but a few years ago his countrymen erected a bronze statue to his memory, not far from the place where he constructed that marvelous ‘Hall-i-th-Wood Wheel.’ ”

## FOLLOWING THE BROOK.



HERE does it come from, I wonder!" exclaimed Beth; the children were all out in the woods together, that bright July day, and Beth had been watching the noisy little brook that tumbled down over the moss-grown stones, and then hurried away to bathe the cardinal blossoms in the meadow below.

"Wouldn't it be fun to follow it way, way up to the ledge."

Beth was talking to herself, for the other children had gone with nurse Gretna down to the field where the hay-makers were busy at work, and, thinking to follow them in a few moments, Beth lingered behind to get a drink of water at the brook. Now she would so like to know just where it began.

There was a bright gleam through the leaves that looked like a golden gate, and every dash of the noisy little brook over the rough pebbles that interrupted the onward course

of the cool, sparkling water seemed to say: "Come and see — come, come, see, see!"

Up through the tangle of sweet briar and running blackberry vines, climbed Beth, but the golden gate seemed farther and farther away.

A cat-bird peered down through the tall hemlock trees and startled her with its loud "oluw, oluw," but, nothing daunted, the little girl kept on.

A fragrant pink orchid brushed against her dress, and when she stopped to pluck it, she saw to her amazement, how far up the hillside she had wandered already.

Like Liliputians seemed nurse Gretna, Madge, Percy and Robin, away down in the valley, and yet the bewitching little brook still called her on and she could not resist.

"I cannot lose my way," she said to herself, "for it will be very easy just to turn around whenever I get tired, and follow the brook back to the meadow."

But by this time nurse Gretna and the chil-



THE OTHER CHILDREN HAD GONE WITH NURSE GRETNÄ.

dren had begun to wonder why Beth lingered so long in the woods.

Looking up, they saw her red jacket almost on the verge of the ledge, and nurse Gretna, remembering her own adventure in the Thuringian forest, grew terribly alarmed. But Beth was too far away to hear their voices and evidently had no idea of her danger.

The underbrush concealed the dreadful precipice, and she thought only of the brook with its siren-like voice, and that strange golden gate in the distance.

"Madge, Robin, Percy!" cried nurse Gretna, "let us have a race up the hill and see who will first reach Beth. We'll play she is little Red Riding Hood pursued by the wolf; and Percy, you must take this stick for a sword and be the brave knight to rescue her!"

With merry shouts the children started, but nurse Gretna kept far ahead.

She reached Beth just in time, another step would have plunged the heedless little girl many, many feet into the valley below.

"But I didn't think there was any danger!" she exclaimed; "I only wanted to find where the brook came from."

"Yes," said nurse Gretna, "but you must re-



member that only wood fairies and brownies can find out such secrets; if you want to play hide-and-seek, don't take a mountain brook for your playmate, unless you can borrow wings!"

## IN A GARDEN.



HEN Patrick laid out their garden in the spring, each of the children had petitioned for a little plot of ground that should be all their own.

"We'll take the best possible care of it mamma," said Madge, "for

we mean to divide it into four beds—one a-piece you know—and we're not going to allow a single weed in any of them."

Mamma declared it was an excellent idea, and encouraged the little gardeners in their undertaking by getting them trowels, hoes, watering-pots and numerous packages of flower seeds.

Early in the morning all through the spring you might have seen them busily at work in their own little corner, and by the middle of



**"BUSILY AT WORK IN THEIR OWN LITTLE CORNER."**

July the four beds began to reward them for their labor. Percy had sown some portulacas in the shape of an anchor, and Robin had spelled out his name with a handful of the same kind of seed; Beth by selecting the flowers that open and close at certain fixed hours through the day had contrived a sort of floral clock that was really quite ingenious, and Madge had laid out her plot with rows of sweet-pea vines encircling a bed of pansies.

One morning when they went out as usual to water their plants, Beth who ran on ahead discovered to her dismay that a part of her pretty clock had been eaten by caterpillars.

"The horrid, ugly things!" she exclaimed; "what shall we do to get rid of them?"

Patrick had a remedy close at hand, but it was a long time before the "flower clock" could be thoroughly repaired; the "Marvel-of-Péru" was almost completely destroyed, and the "hibiscus" and "dianthus" required very careful tending for days after.

One day when Mademoiselle was down in the garden with Madge and Beth, and saw what ravages the caterpillars had made, she told the children the following story:

"Once upon a time," when I was in Munich, I saw caterpillars put to a very curious use

"It was in the garden of an officer of the engineers, and he had arranged a series of trellises over which had been spread a thin paste made of the kind of leaves most frequently eaten by these caterpillars. Then, with a camel's hair pencil dipped in oil, the officer who had quite a talent for designing would draw out over the prepared paste all sorts of intricate patterns. The caterpillars selected were of a peculiar species that spun a very strong web, and these he would place in large numbers at the foot of the trellises, or rather boards, for the frame work was very firm and close.

"Beginning here, the caterpillars would eat and spin their way up, carefully avoiding every part touched by the oil, but eagerly devouring every other part of the paste."

"But could anything be done with the webs, Mademoiselle, when they were completed?" inquired Madge.

"Yes, indeed, that was the most wonderful part of it, for after the pattern was wrought, it was made up into the most exquisite veils I ever



saw. One of them, I remember, measured twenty-six and a half by seventeen inches, and weighed only 1.51 grains! The design was quite open, but the veil proved to be very strong, although it seemed to have no more substance than a spider's web."

## CRUISE OF THE BRITISH LION.



HY is it, Uncle Joe," said Percy, one day, " that you keep that old battered lion's head on the top of our beautiful cabinet ? "

" Oh ! ' thereby hangs a tale ' — would you like to hear it ? "

" ' Once upon a time ' when I was a little fellow, not much over twelve years of age, I went with my father down on the wharves where a number of vessels had just unladed their merchandise.

" Among them was an English steamship that greatly interested me ; the figure head at its bows had become a little damaged, and one of the workmen was repairing it. He sat on a curious sort of staging that had been lowered from the vessel by stout ropes, and just beneath this dangerous seat a small row-boat lay at anchor. The great white sea-gulls flew about him as he worked, and the strange seat swayed

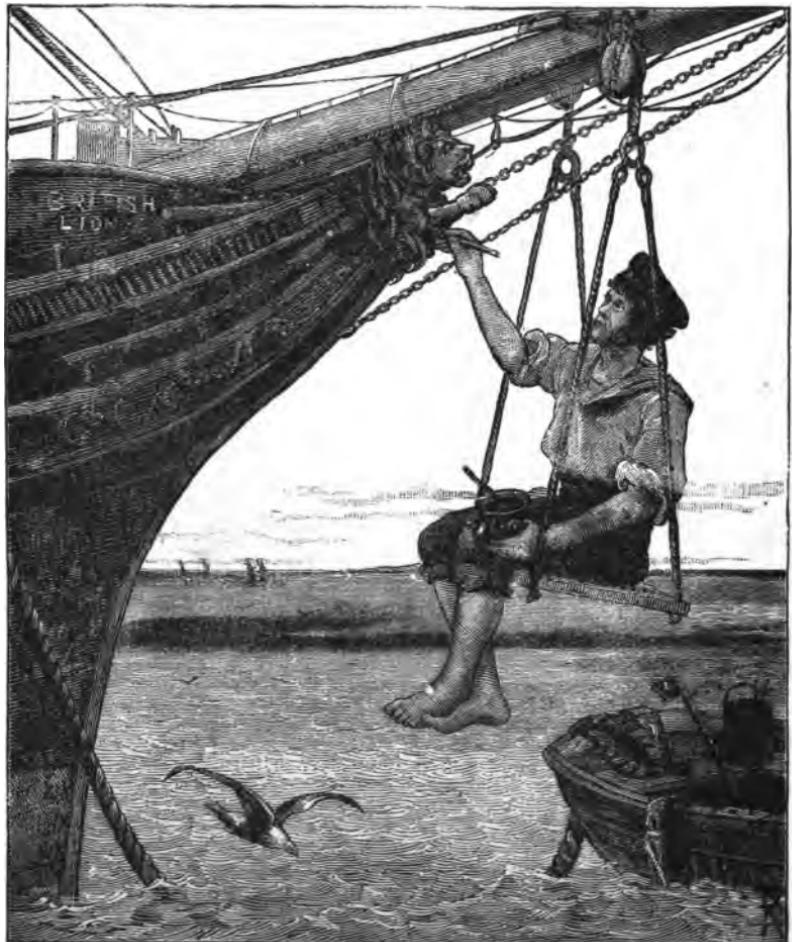
backward and forward just like your swing in the orchard.

"I begged my father while he was talking with the captain to let me sit in the little row-boat and watch the painter, and it was there that I first made up my mind to follow the sea.

"When the 'British Lion' set sail again, I was enrolled as her cabin boy.

"I soon found that 'a life on the ocean wave' was not altogether so pleasant as I had fancied; there were days and days when I couldn't lift up my head for sea-sickness, and then as cabin-boy I had plenty of hard work to do.

"When we reached England, we stopped just long enough for fresh supplies, and then set sail for the Mediterranean. Get your atlas, Percy, and I will show you the course we took. After passing through the straits of Gibraltar, we stopped a few days at Malaga; then we went to Marseilles, which you know is the chief seaport of France on the Mediterranean shore, and I remember it was only a short distance from



"HE SAT ON A CURIOUS SORT OF STAGING."

there that I first saw the beautiful phosphorescent light on the water."

"A light on the water, Uncle Joe; why, what makes it?" inquired Percy.

"Millions of little creatures that send out bits of phosphorus from their bodies just like that fire-fly you caught and kept so long in your hand the other evening. The whole track of our vessel was one broad pathway of flame, the ridge of every wave ornamented in the same manner."

"Oh, how beautiful! why, it must have looked like 'Fourth of July' fireworks in the ocean!" exclaimed Percy.

"Well, it was certainly a magnificent sight, but the light lasted only a short time; just after we had passed the rugged mountains of Sardinia there came a heavy swell, and I heard a great noise on the upper deck, with loud cries of 'Back her!'

"Another second, and the crash came. I was terribly frightened, for I thought we had struck upon a rock; but through the thick fog I could now discern the masts of a brig. In the dark-

ness we had run down upon her, and tore open one whole side ; she was fast sinking, and there was only time to lower one of our small boats and rescue the crew. It was a comfort to know that every life on board was saved, but the



pretty little brig soon went to the bottom. Our vessel was but slightly injured; a part of the figure head was knocked off, and when they replaced it with another, I begged for this old 'British Lion' that you see."

## ROBIN'S EGG BLUE.



GIRLS! just see what we've found!" exclaimed Percy and Robin, one day, as they came running in from the orchard. It was a bird's nest made of rough sticks and straws carefully plastered together with mud; inside there was a soft lining of fine grass, upon which lay five eggs of a delicate blue tint.

"Why, it's a robin's nest!" exclaimed Madge, who had just begun to study natural history; "but how could you be so cruel, boys, as to take it down from the trees?"

"Oh, it did look so pretty, we couldn't bear to leave it. And then, too, we thought you would like it for your collection."

"But it's nothing more nor less than burglary to rob a bird of its dainty little house, and I shan't touch so much as a single egg. Hark! the poor mother bird is crying now. Do run



**"IN A CORNER OF THE LECTERN RIGHT UNDER THE GREAT BIBLE."**

and put the nest back, Percy, and leave everything just exactly as you found it."

The boys demurred a little, at first, for they wanted to keep the pretty plaything ; but the poor robin's cries touched their hearts, and with a deal of dexterity they finally succeeded in replacing the nest upon the crotch in the old apple-tree.

When they came back to the house empty-handed, mamma rewarded them with a kiss and the following story :

" 'Once upon a time' there was an old church all out of repair, and a large sum of money had been contributed by the parish to remodel it.

" They wanted it to be made beautiful as well as strong, and so they engaged some of the best fresco painters in the country to come and ornament the walls and ceiling.

" One day a pair of robins who were out house-hunting flew into the church.

" The workmen were so busy hammering, plastering, and painting in one of the farther transepts that none of them noticed the birds.

"So, unmolested, they investigated every nook and corner of the old chancel, and finally, after a great deal of robin-talk, they decided upon a place to build.

"It was in a corner of the lectern, right under the great Bible.

"I don't know how they managed to work so stealthily, but nobody discovered the nest until it was almost completed, and then one of the carpenters said, 'Let it be; the church will not be ready for use till the eggs are hatched, and the young birds flown.'

"I'm afraid if there had been any curious little boys about, the pretty nest might have been disturbed,"—here Percy and Robin hung down their heads—but mamma well knew how sorry they were now for that thoughtless raid in the orchard, and putting her arms about them she went on with the story.

"When the fresco painters came to the chancel they were a little in doubt as to what ground-work of color would look best with the dark wood trimmings.

"Suddenly one of them spied the dainty nest with its five delicately-tinted eggs.

"'Look!' he exclaimed, 'this is just what we want, for do you not see how beautifully the color of the eggs harmonizes with the soft, warm browns about the nest?'



"It was, indeed, just the most suitable ground-work that could be chosen for the walls, and when the chancel was completed, artists came from far and near to see this exquisite effect of dark Gothic arches in their setting of 'Robin's Egg Blue.'"

## BORN TO BE AN ARTIST.



"EE Madge, I've been drawing a picture of your doll this morning!" exclaimed Beth, holding up a sheet of paper over which a very black pencil had been travelling.

"I'm glad you told me what it was," laughed Madge, "for I never should have guessed!"

"What an ungrateful mother you are, when I've taken all this pains to get a good portrait of your child!" retorted Beth, good-naturedly; "however, I think myself the nose is a little awry—dear me! I'm afraid I was never born to be an artist."

"Shall I tell you of a little boy away off in France who wanted to be a painter?" said Mademoiselle.

"Oh, do, do!" exclaimed all the children in one breath.

"Well, 'once upon a time' in the Castle of

Villiers, near Andelys, there lived a little boy whose name was Nicholas; his father wanted him to be educated as a soldier, but his mother said she hoped he would be a clergyman. Nicholas, however, liked nothing so well as to draw pictures of the flowers and birds and trees that he found around the castle, and one day he tried some portraits in crayon. It was about this time that an artist from Normandy, Quentin Varin by name, came to the castle to make a visit. When he saw the sketches that little Nicholas had made, he was very much surprised and delighted.

“‘ You must not make a soldier nor a clergyman of your son,’ he said to the parents, ‘ for Nicholas was born to be an artist.’

“ With some reluctance the father and mother finally consented to have him take lessons in drawing, and when he was eighteen years of age he went to Paris to continue his studies.

“ But here he met with a great many discouragements, for his parents, although they lived in a castle, had no ready money to help him until



**"I THINK MYSELF THE NOSE IS A LITTLE AWRY."**

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he was able to earn something for himself, and at length in despair he took up sign-painting for a means of livelihood.

"His wages were very small, but he worked steadily, and now and then succeeded in selling some of his sketches. One day he saw a few of Julio Romano's and Raphael's engravings ; these inspired him with a desire to see Rome, and he began to lay by a few pennies every day for this purpose.

"Alas ! when his savings were nearly sufficient, and he was just preparing for the journey, the little purse was stolen, and he had to begin anew.

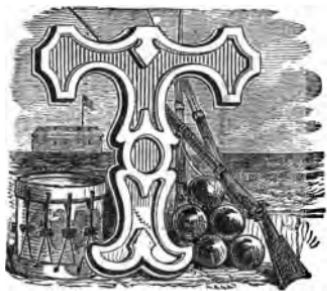
"But he was a brave, persevering lad, and worked his way from village to village until he got back to Paris. Here, the Jesuits were just preparing to celebrate the canonization of St. Ignatius and St. Francis Xavier, and some of the pupils of the fathers who knew Nicholas, gave him an order to paint several pictures representing the miracles of these saints. In six

days he painted six pictures in distemper, which gave him both money and fame, and Cavalier Marin, an Italian poet, who was then in Paris, offered to take the young painter back to Italy with him. But Nicholas had numerous orders now for other pictures, and it was not till these were finished that he availed himself of the poet's kindness.

"Cavalier Marin proved a true friend, and his death, a few years after, was a great loss to the young painter; many more struggles and discouragements awaited him, but in spite of every obstacle he advanced so steadily in his art that honor after honor was conferred upon him, and a few years after, he received the brevet of first painter to Louis XIV., and an invitation to decorate the grand gallery of the Louvre.

"Nicholas Poussin was indeed 'born to be an artist,' but he would never have won the highest rank among the painters of France, had it not been for his indefatigable industry and indomitable perseverance."

## PUSSY-CAT PRUE.



HE children had lost their kitten. Nobody had seen it since early morning, when with many antics up and down the trees, it had followed Percy and Robin out into the orchard.

Beth was inconsolable, for the pretty, purring little creature was her especial pet, and when after a third fruitless search she came back to the house with a suspicion of tears in her brown eyes, mamma, to comfort her, called the children to her room, and told them the following story :

“ ‘Once upon a time,’ when I was a little girl just about as old as Beth, I had a pet kitten that I called ‘pussy-cat Prue.’ It was not jet black like your ‘Topsy,’ but a pure maltese, with one spot of white just under its chin.

“One day we were all playing out in the yard together, your Uncle Joe, Aunt Sue, myself, and pussy-cat Prue.



**"WITH ONE SPOT OF WHITE JUST UNDER ITS CHIN."**

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" I remember we children had been talking that morning about the strange and unaccountable cloud that had suddenly settled over our pleasant home ; for the whole past week mother had looked very grave and anxious, and father, usually so full of fun, had not had a single frolic with us. What could it all mean ?

" Pussy-cat Prue lay quietly sleeping in my lap while we were talking, but all at once she pricked up her ears, darted down the path that led to the house, and disappeared around the corner.

" When we called her a half hour later to get her saucer of milk, she was nowhere to be found.

" I did not think it very strange then, for she frequently wandered down to the barn on mousing expeditions ; but when night came and pussy-cat Prue still failed to put in her appearance, I began to feel much as little Beth does this morning.

" Next day, we all started off in different direc-

tions to hunt up our missing pet. Uncle Joe said he would make a thorough search down in the barn, while Sue and I were investigating every nook and corner of the old farm-house.

"As I went up the attic stairs, I thought I heard a faint '*meow*'; calling Sue, I begged her to listen, but not another sound could we hear, and so I concluded it was only a loose board I had trod upon.

"Later in the afternoon, however, when the house was still and we were all down-stairs, I was quite sure I heard the '*meow*' several times repeated.

"It seemed to come from the attic, so Joe took his lantern and we all went up together and called till our lungs were tired.

"Suddenly Sue happened to think of a place under the eaves where there was a wide crack in the floor; possibly pussy-cat Prue had been ensnared just here in search of a rat.

"But now we heard the most pitiful '*meow*' right under our feet.

"Get a chisel or something, Joe,' I cried, and lift up a plank!"

"The board was already a little loose, so it easily yielded to our energetic pulls, and we had to raise but one corner, when out jumped pussy-cat Prue, all covered with dust and cobwebs.

"She laid a tiny mouse at our feet, and then darted back again ; it was evident she had found a whole nest, and was anxious to display all her trophies. Joe's curiosity was excited, and, peering down into the dark hole, he saw the nest, and close by it a large roll of papers. These were very old and yellow, but hoping to find some pictures in the pile we carried them down stairs.

"Mother met us in the hall, and I never shall forget her cry of delight as she took the papers from Joe's hand. Among them was the long-lost deed of the old farm. Had it not been found that week, we should have forfeited our pleasant homestead, and wasn't it strange we owed the lifting of the cloud all to the wanderings of pussy-cat Prue."

## A LITTLE TRAMP.



MAMMA!" exclaimed Robin one day, as he came running upstairs two steps at a time, "there's the strangest little boy down at the door that you ever saw! He looks just like an Indian, only his eyes are blue, and his hair is as curly as mine. Do come down and buy a basket of him!"

Now mamma had a great horror of tramps, and her first thought was of a horde of gipsies that she had read about in the morning paper.

So telling Robin to close the door, she hastened down-stairs to interview the little stranger.

He was an odd-looking child, certainly ; brown as a berry, and dressed in genuine gipsy-fashion, but to her surprise he answered every question with the voice and manners of a city-bred boy.

When she opened the door, he was sitting

near the gardener's lodge and amusing the children by balancing on his lips a willow whistle surmounted with a pea; the big basket at his side was half filled with a variety of straw knick-knacks which, however, he seemed in no anxiety to sell.

"If you've any work for me, ma'am, I should be glad to do it for my dinner," he said, when mamma asked him what he wanted.

Now Patrick happened to have a deal of weeding to do that day down in the garden, so she told the little tramp he might stay and help.

The children were greatly delighted, for they had taken a strange fancy to the boy, and mamma herself was not a little interested in "Gipsy John," as he called himself.

When he had finished his work and was eating the generous dinner she had provided for him, she asked him numerous questions.

At first he answered only in monosyllables, but at length when he saw the real kindness of his new friend, he burst into tears and said "he was just tired to death of being a gipsy!"



**HE WAS BALANCING ON HIS LIPS A WILLOW WHISTLE.**

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"But your father and mother are kind to you, are they not?"

"I haven't any here — at least, I don't know where they are!" sobbed the boy.

"Do you mean that you have lost your way — where have you had your encampment this week? And how did it happen that you wandered away from the rest?"

"I don't belong to them any way! I wish I'd never seen the old camp!"

A sudden thought of Charlie Ross flashed across mamma's mind, and although she knew the boy before her was by no means the long, lost child, she felt assured he was no impostor, and her sympathies were now fully aroused.

"My poor child," she said, putting her hand upon his curly head; "tell me all about it, and perhaps I can help you."

"Five weeks ago," he began, "I was at home; but it seems five years! I had a long, hard history lesson to learn for the next day at school, and took my book out under the trees. It was a warm day and I didn't feel a bit like

study; as I lay there my little dog suddenly ran up to me, and then I saw a party of gipsies coming down the road. They had baskets and mats in their wagon, and came up to our house to sell them. One of the boys



was about as large as I, and as he came whistling along I thought how nice it would be to have no lessons to learn, and nothing to do but to live out of doors, just like the birds, and wander from place to place wherever one liked.

## CAMPING OUT.

(Continuation of Little Tramp—Part II.)



WELL, after talking with the boy awhile," continued the little tramp, "I laid down my book and thought I would go with him and see the encampment, which he told me was only a few rods off in an oak grove at the top of the hill. He told me if I would bring them something to eat, I should have just as many bow and arrows and toy canoes as I wanted; so I slipped into the house and filled the big lunch-basket with all the broken pieces of food I could find, and started with him.

"When we got to the encampment, one old woman that the boy called Jean, was just boiling some mush in a great kettle, and on a big cloth spread under the trees, her daughter had put a



**"ONE OLD WOMAN WAS JUST BOILING SOME MUSH."**

number of dishes, and was pouring out a curious kind of drink.

"There were a good many other gipsies scattered about under the trees, and as we came up the hill they all came forward to meet us.

"My basket was soon emptied, and they willingly filled it up with all the pretty willow toys I wanted, but when I started to go home, the old woman said I must first sit down and drink a cup of coffee with them.

"I kept telling her I didn't want any, but she insisted upon my taking some and I didn't dare to refuse.

"After that I don't know just what happened — I suppose they must have put some sort of drug into my cup, for I began to feel dizzy and soon fell fast asleep; when I woke up it was in the middle of the night, and I seemed to be in the bottom of a great wagon that was rumbling along over the road at a very rapid rate.

"I was dreadfully frightened and began to cry, but the boy who sat close beside me put his

hand over my mouth and said if I made any noise he was afraid the men would beat me.

"So I kept as quiet as I could until it grew light and I found we were in a place I had never seen before.

"Oh, how I longed for home and my dear mother!

"But the gipsies only laughed at my tears, and asked me why I had left my home if I liked it so much.

"Then I began to think how anxious my father and mother would be, and how very wrong it was for me to run away as I did without saying a word to any one.

"I was sorry enough now, but it did no good to cry, and I began to contrive all sorts of ways to get home again.

"Our encampment was in a dense wood that morning, and as it rained hard all day I could not tell, as I had hoped by the sun, the points of compass.

"Oh, what a long, dreary day it was! The little boy whom they called Pedro, tried to com-

fort me, and showed me how to make baskets but all I wanted was my own dear home and my father and mother!"

Here the little tramp broke down entirely, and with a beseeching look in his great blue eyes, he exclaimed :

"O lady! shall I ever see them again?"



"Tell me the whole story," said mamma, drawing Percy and Robin closer to her, "perhaps after all your home is not so far away."

## OUT OF THE WOODS.

(Little Tramp—Part III.)



S the little tramp told his real name, and the town where his father and mother lived, Mrs. Treadwell was convinced that he was the same child she had read about in the morning paper, but to make certain, she questioned him a little further.

The children all gathered around to hear this strange story from real life that was far more interesting than any of the "make believe" runaway tales they had ever read.

"What have you been doing all these five weeks?" inquired mamma.

"Oh, I've just been trying to get home; four times I've run away, but the gipsies have tracked me each time and brought me back. I can't think why they should want to keep me, for I've given them a deal of trouble, and I haven't tried to sell a single basket."

"Yesterday morning I slipped off before it was light; I didn't stop to put on my **jacket** but tucked it into my basket, and waded **across** the brook as fast as ever I could.

"Then I ran and ran, always keeping toward the east for I found out from Pedro that we were going to the far west very soon, and bye-and-bye would come to broad prairies.

"When he told me that, I was just discouraged, for I knew if the gypsies carried me off there, I never should be able to find my way home.

"But you see I'm nearly two days ahead of them now, and in all the four times I've tried to run away, I never got so far before."

"How tired you must be with running so fast!" exclaimed Percy.

"And didn't you have anything to eat in' the woods?" asked Robin.

"I didn't stop to think whether I was tired or not," answered the little tramp, "but I did get very hungry, and wished I could find some berries.



**"I HEARD A RUSTLING."**

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"Once I thought I saw some wild crab-apples down by the river, but just as I got near the tree, I heard a rustling in the underbrush, and voices not far away.

"I thought to be sure that the gipsies were close upon me, and seeing an opening among the rocks on the bank, I hid myself until I saw there was nobody coming that I need fear.

"It was only a little girl on horseback, and her groom walking beside her. I followed them at a distance, for I did not dare to come very near, and that was how I found my way out of the woods.

"Oh, you can't think how glad I was when I saw houses just ahead, and knew we were really coming to a town!"

"Did you sleep out in the woods all alone, last night?" asked Robin.

"Oh, yes, but I didn't mind that," said the boy, "for you see I haven't slept indoors for a long, long time, and I'd a deal rather be alone than with those dreadful gipsies!"

While the little tramp had been telling this part of his story, mamma had sent Patrick to the detective's office, and an hour afterward the



child was identified as the very little Herbert whose strange disappearance more than a month before had been the talk and wonder of the whole community.

## HARVEST HOME.



**H**EY  
are going  
to take in  
the last  
load of  
wheat  
from  
the big  
mead-  
ow, to-  
morr-  
ow,"  
said  
Percy,  
"can't  
we go  
too,

mamma, and play 'Harvest Home'?"



PLAYING "HARVEST HOME."

"Perhaps so, if the day is pleasant, but what do you know about harvesting, I wonder."

"Oh, ever so much, for Uncle Joe has been telling us what they do in England, and showing us some pictures."

"I wasn't here," said Robin, "so please tell me about it, or I shan't know what to do tomorrow."

"Why, they have a Harvest Queen, and they 'cry the mare,' and dance and sing, and do a great many things that we can't do, of course; but I'll tell you the story just as Uncle Joe told me:

"'Once upon a time,' he said, when he was in Buckinghamshire, he saw a real old-fashioned 'Harvest Home.'

"The cornfields were full of reapers, and he said it was a pretty sight to watch them bind the sheaves.

"This is the way they do it," and Percy seizing a piece of rattan for a sickle, showed Robin how the skilful reaper would cut down a whole armful at one sweep, and lay it neat and level so that

all the straws when bound together might touch the ground, and be even at the top.

"Then this is the way they make the corn-bands, twisting the ears of corn just as I do this piece of paper; it must be very difficult, you see, to tie them in close clusters so that the grain can't shake out, and then to fasten these bands around the big sheaves so that they can be rolled over when stacking and loading without the heads becoming loose."

"I should think so," said Robin, "but what do they do after binding the sheaves?"

"Why the men put them into 'stooks'—that is, big clusters of eight or ten sheaves all piled together.

"Then, when the wagon comes around they thrust their forks into the 'stooks' and throw the sheaves upon the load faster than you can count them.

"Uncle Joe says that when the reapers move on from one 'stook' to another there is always a great rush and scramble among the gleaners to

get to the spot first cleared, for often great ears of loose and fallen corn are found here.

"He told me, too, that he often saw children no larger than you and I, Robin, among the gleaners; they each carried a sort of bag and a pair of scissors, and after filling their own little bags with all the ears of corn they could find, they would empty them into the great 'poke.'"

"Why, what is that?" exclaimed Robin.

"Oh, a big bag that the older gleaners keep under the hedges, just as we have a larger basket when we go berrying where we can empty our little pails.

"But when the reapers are ready for the very last load, then comes the best time of all.

"The last sheaf is always tied with bright ribbons, and sometimes they dress it up just like a doll, and call it the Corn Baby!"

"How funny it must look! But what did you mean by 'crying the mare?'" asked Robin.

"Oh, that was a curious custom Uncle Joe told me they used to have in the Isle of Skye.

"Instead of making a corn doll there, the

reapers used to tie up the last handfuls of grain very tightly and stand the sheaf upright in the middle of the field.

"Then all the reapers would throw their sickles at it, and the one who succeeded in cutting it down cried out 'I have her!' 'What have you?' said the rest in concert, (somewhat as we do, you know, in our game of 'My ship's come in.') 'A mare, a mare, a mare!' he answered; and then they asked, 'What will you do with her?' 'Send her to John Snooks, he would reply, or whatever farmer in the neighborhood happened then to have some of his grain still standing in the fields.

"Then they would choose their Harvest Queen and crown her with corn flowers; her throne was arranged on the very top of the load, and the reapers formed a sort of procession, singing harvest songs all the way home.

"In the evening they would have a great supper out in the barn, and all sorts of curious games; wasn't that a merry way of bringing the 'Harvest Home?'"

## ALL HALLOWS E'EN.



E'RE going to 'bob for apples,' to-night, Uncle Joe," exclaimed Robin, coming up from the cellar with a dishful of great purple-red 'pearmains,' " and we want you to come and help us."

"All right," laughed Uncle Joe, "you may depend upon seeing me, when the witches peep in at the door."

It was nurse Gretna who had told the children about All Hallows E'en, and how in the old country they used to celebrate it with all sorts of curious games; and for a week past Percy had been counting up the days to the thirty-first of October.

"We have plenty of nuts and apples," suggested Beth, "and I don't see why we couldn't try some of the games ourselves."

Mamma had no objections, if nurse Gretna



**"WE'RE GOING TO 'BOB' FOR APPLES."**

would superintend the novel entertainment, so on All Hallows E'en, as soon as it was dark under the table, a merry bevy of children gathered around the open fireplace in the dining-room.

While the nuts were cracking on the hearth, Madge took an old curtain stick pointed at both ends and suspended it horizontally from the ceiling with a stout string. Then after a very sour apple was thrust upon one end and a big pumpkin sweet on the other, the stick was made to twirl rapidly, and with many bumps and unsuccessful hits the merry children, their hands fastened behind them, tried to take a bite from the apple that would prove their sweet or sour disposition.

But the best fun of all was the "bobbing"; a great tub of water was brought in from the kitchen and a whole basketful of apples poured in.

Then the children, one by one, were invited to take out an apple with their teeth, which seemed to them a very easy thing to do as they watched

the fruit floating about on the surface of the water.

"I know I can get one!" shouted Percy, as Madge with dripping curls lifted her head after three unsuccessful dives.

"Oh dear! How the apples do wriggle about, though!" he exclaimed, as with eye fixed upon one great pearmain, he knocked it vainly from side to side; suddenly, a bright thought seized him, and taking a long breath he manfully plunged his head far down in the water and forced the apple to the very bottom of the tub. Then, clutching it firmly with his teeth, he brought it up triumphantly!

"Now let me try," said Robin, pushing back his curls.

The thought of going quite under water as Percy did, was not altogether pleasing to the little fellow who was a genuine landsman and so he contrived another way of compassing the same end.

Selecting a very small apple and putting his lips close to it as it lay quietly on the surface, he

managed at last to *suck* it up without so much as wetting his eyebrows!

Beth happened to find an apple with a long stem and gained her prize so easily that the children declared it was not fair, and that she must try again.

When Uncle Joe's turn came, he went to the kitchen closet and got an old-fashioned steel fork dropping this from a height into the tub of water he succeeded in spearing quite a number of the apples, and for the remainder of the evening the sport of "bobbing" was changed into a fine display of markmanship.

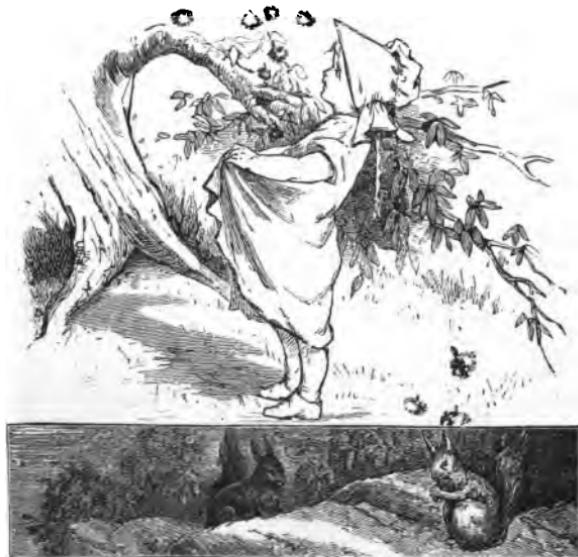
Then Uncle Joe took an English sovereign from his pocket, and asked Madge to bring him a saucer and a cup pressed down with flour.

Reversing this heaping cup into the saucer, just as one would a mud-pie, he put the gold piece on the top of the flour pyramid and bade the children each cut a slice from it without disturbing the sovereign.

It required a deal of skill, but they all managed so deftly that at last the gold piece stood

firmly upon a symmetrical tower that Uncle Joe called Cleopatra's Needle.

"Now as we cut closer," he said, "the sove-



reign will begin to totter, and whoever catches it on his tongue shall have it for his own." Another second and Robin caught it! at the expense however of a face all covered with flour.

## PRETTY POLL.



HOW like a human being it seemed—that comical paroquet the children saw at the bird show!

To be sure, it could not chatter and scream so fast as some of the foreign parrots close by, but then it performed many wonderful tricks, and seemed in every way quite as intelligent. The owner was greatly attached to his pet, and this is the story he told, in answer to Percy's numerous questions.

“‘Once upon a time,’ when I was camping out in Kentucky, I heard a great noise just over my head, and looking up I saw an immense flock of paroquets coming down to take a drink of the salt water in Big Bone Lick. When they lighted on the ground, it looked at a little distance as if a brilliant carpet of green, orange, and yellow had suddenly been spread down on the banks of the creek, and after they had taken their fill of



**"THAT COMICAL PAROQUET."**

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water, the trees all about seemed a-flame with their gorgeous plumage! I found they liked the sycamore trees best, and at night would generally roost in the hollow of the trunk and branches. By slightly wounding one of these paroquets in the wing, I caught it; then I fixed up a place for it in the stern of my boat, and fed it upon a kind of cockle-bur of which the birds are all very fond. It soon grew quite tame, and when I had to leave my boat and travel by land, I used to wrap the bird up in a large silk hand-kerchief, and carry it in my pocket. At night when I encamped in the woods, I would release my prisoner and let him sit on the baggage beside me; this he seemed to enjoy greatly, dozing and gazing at the fire till morning. Nearly a thousand miles we travelled together in this manner; the Chickasaw and Choctaw Indians that I met in the woods were always greatly amused at the sight of my pet, and I remember they called it in their language '*Kelinky.*' Sometimes, right in the midst of those fearful Kentucky morasses where the undergrowth of canes and other ever-

greens makes it seem in the middle of the day like midnight, the paroquet would slip out of my pocket and fly away. But I always managed to catch him again, although many times I was almost inclined to give up the chase.

"As soon as I could, I got a cage, and as paroquets always like company, I caught another bird and put it into the cage with Poll. But the new comer lived only a short time, and then poor Poll was inconsolable.

"At last, I put a small looking-glass beside the cage, and my pet seeing the reflection of his own image was quite comforted!

"I tried to tempt his appetite with various kinds of food, but although he would eat the hackberry, the cypress-tree seeds and especially beech nuts, with a relish, there was nothing he liked so much as the cockle-burs.

"Once I let him out into my apple orchard, and he had great fun in picking off the fruit and throwing it about under the trees, but I don't think he tasted of one, or tried to pick out the seeds, as I had been told all paroquets did.

"So, I procured a great quantity of cockle-burs when I was at the South, for you know they grow very abundantly there, and that is what I have fed him on principally, ever since.

"Do you notice how he holds everything in his *left* claw? He has always done so, and as I cannot teach him to use the right in the same manner I call him my left-footed bird."

"Do the wild paroquets build nests in trees?" asked Percy.

"Sometimes they put a few twigs together in a rough manner, but when they can find a comfortable hole in some hollow tree or bank I don't think they take the trouble to build a nest; the two eggs that you find in these cavities are nearly round, and of a rich, greenish white. The young birds, like owls, are covered with a soft down at first, and it is very interesting to watch from week to week the change of color in their plumage. For awhile they are almost entirely green, then a few yellow feathers make their appearance, but it is a number of months before they have the brilliant colors of a full-grown bird."

## THE FERRY BOY OF TAVISTOCK.



WASH tub will do for the boat, Robin, and these old broom handles we'll take for oars!"

It was Percy who stood as master of ceremonies that day and he had an important story to relate.

"We're all ready now, Robin, so you'd better call the girls; and don't forget," he added, in a mysterious

whisper, "that you are to put on the old three-cornered hat when you come as 'Sir John.'"

"Once upon a time," there was a little English boy by the name of Francis, who lived in Tavistock, close by the river Tamar; he was the eldest of a large family, and to help his father who was a poor sailor he got a position as ferry-boy.

"From morning till night you might have

seen Francis and his dog Mac waiting along shore in the little ferry-boat or carrying passengers back and forth across the river.

“One day there was a heavy shower just as a gentleman came to signal the boat; so he and Francis stepped into the ferry house on the banks of the river and waited until the storm was over.

“As the gentleman sat by the fire of turf and driftwood, he noticed what a bright, honest face the little boy had, and began to ask him a great many questions.

“He told him wonderful stories too, of lands across the sea where there was never any winter, and where the birds and flowers were far more beautiful than any he had ever read of, or imagined.

“In answer to some questions about his father and mother, the gentleman found to his surprise that Francis was a sort of fourth or fifth cousin to him, and after the storm was over he went home with the little ferry boy.

“Now this stranger was the famous Sir John



**FRANCIS AND HIS DOG MAC WAITING ALONG SHORE.**

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Hawkins—make your best bow, Robin! and when he saw how eager Francis was to learn, he offered to place him in a good school and pay all his expenses.

“The little ferry boy was very grateful and studied hard, but he had after all only a few months of schooling, for it was just about that time Queen Mary began her persecutions and as Francis’ father was a Protestant, the whole family were obliged to flee from Devonshire into Kent.

“Francis not long after was apprenticed to the master of a small trading vessel that used to make voyages to Holland and France, and when the owner was about to die he gave him the bark and all the belongings.

“I suppose Francis might have made a great deal of money if he had stayed here, but as soon as he could he sold the boat and went to Plymouth, where he knew he should find Sir John.

“Here, he entered the royal navy, and soon set out for Vera Cruz with his old friend who was the commander of the expedition.

"Afterwards he went to the West Indies and Central America on a cruise against the Spaniards and was very successful.

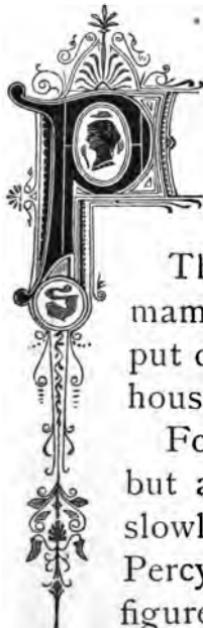
"All this time he was growing more and more famous, and when he came back to England he fitted up three frigates and served as volunteer under the earl of Essex in Ireland.

"He was so brave in all his exploits that Sir Christopher Hatton wanted to present him to Queen Elizabeth, and it was not long after his introduction to her, that the Queen furnished him with five vessels and sent him to attack the Spaniards in the South seas."

"Oh!" exclaimed Madge, "now I know who it is you are telling us about. The ferry boy of Tavistock must be Sir Francis Drake, for in yesterday's history lesson, I remember it told us how he came to North America in the queen's vessels and coasted all along the shore."

"Yes, and it was he who was vice-admiral when the Spanish armada was defeated; but years before that, he was made a knight of the realm."

## "BONNIE DUNDEE."



*I-RHU-konuil — correi!* — louder and sharper came the strange unearthly noise — what could it be?

The children dropped their playthings, mamma left her sewing, Mademoiselle put down her book, and every one in the house rushed to the nearest window.

For sometime nothing could be seen, but at last, just beyond the hedge, and slowly travelling up the carriage road, Percy spied a quaint, outlandish little figure.

He was dressed in bright 'Rob-roy' plaid, with a queer cap perched on one side of a diminutive head, and slung across his shoulder was an old-fashioned Scotch bag-pipe.

"Pi-rhu — kon —" here touching his odd little cap, as he spied the ladies, the singer made a



**"HEY FOR THE BONNETS OF BONNIE DUNDEE,"**

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profound bow, and drew out the most heart rending strains from his curious instrument.

“How I wish he would sing us ‘County Guy,’ or ‘Donald Dhu!’” exclaimed Mademoiselle.

But all the little man knew was the distressing “Pi-rhu,” and a part of “Bonnie Dundee,” in the quaint Scotch dialect. These he sang again and again till even the children were tired, and while he was eating the generous bowl of bread and milk that Nancy, at mamma’s suggestion had brought him, they all examined the bag-pipe.

It was the first one the children had ever seen and they could talk of nothing else the whole afternoon but the little Scotchman and his funny instrument.

“And who was ‘Bonnie Dundee,’ mamma?” asked Percy.

“Run down into the library and get that large volume of ‘Scott’s Poems,’ and I will read you the whole song.”

The children clapped their hands with delight, and when mamma read :

*"Dundee he is mounted, he rides up the street,  
The bells they ring backward, the drums they are beat,"*

Robin climbed up on his rocking horse, Beth rang her little centennial bell, and Percy beat a tattoo on his new drum.

"But what did he really do, mamma?" inquired matter-of-fact Madge.

"Well, here is the story in plain prose.

"Once upon a time' when England was about to settle the crown upon William and Mary, Dundee tried to raise the Highlands'clans in favor of King James II. He had only thirty picked men, and the whole city of Edinburgh was opposed to him; but while the drums were calling the citizens to arms against him, he left his men in a by-place and climbed up by the old sally-post into the castle.

"By this means, he held an important conference with the Duke of Gordon, but as he was

not successful in securing him as an ally, he rode off towards Stirling with this threat:

“*If there's lords in the Southland, there's chiefs in the North,  
There are wild dunnie wassals, three thousand times three,  
Will cry, Hey for the bonnets of Bonnie Dundee!*”

“Tell us more, please, of Edinburgh Castle, mamma,” said Beth.

“It is a grand old building and the very first object one sees in approaching the city, for it is situated upon a high rock, two hundred feet above the surrounding country.

“It is said to have been founded as long ago as the year 617, and all sorts of strange, romantic adventures, sieges and captivities have happened here.

“Besides ‘Bonnie Dundee,’ many other brave Highlanders have scaled the steep sides of Castle Rock, and ‘once upon a time’ when it was in the possession of the English king, Edward I. thirty Scotch laddies in their heavy armor, with swords and axes, climbed up by night one of the most dangerous sides, and overcame the garrison.

“Queen Mary’s room is one of the oldest and most interesting places in the whole castle. I remember when we were there the guide showed us the window through which little James VI. was lowered by means of a rope and basket, two hundred and fifty feet, and then carried off secretly to Stirling Castle to be baptized.



“In the armory of Edinburgh Castle, we saw among many other interesting relics, Rob Roy’s dagger and a coat of mail worn by one of the Douglasses in Cromwell’s time.”

## OBEYING ORDERS.



UT you mustn't go in there, Uncle Joe, don't you see it says 'No admittance?'"

Robin had spent the whole morning down on India wharf with Uncle Joe, and they had just entered a large building where upon an inner door the little fellow had descried the forbidding notice.

"But what if it was one of my own offices, young man, and what if I put the sign there myself?"

laughed Uncle Joe, at the same time taking a huge key out of his pocket and turning the lock.

"Oh! I didn't know you belonged here," said Robin apologetically, "and I thought we must obey orders, anyhow."

"That's right, my little man, and it will save



**"YOU MAY TAKE THE OLD MARE, DOLLY."**

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you many a slip in your journey through life, if only you are careful to obey the right commands; let me tell you a story of a little English boy that I heard years ago.

“ ‘Once upon a time’ there was a certain rich farmer in England, whose fields of grain were just ready for the sickle; the very day before he had planned to have the crops harvested he heard of a party of hunters who were coming that way in the morning and might make a thoroughfare of his fields unless every gateway was kept shut.

“ Now the farmer well knew what sad havoc the horses’ hoofs and the trampling of the hounds would make in his fields, and so early in the morning he called one of the little fellows who had come to help about the harvesting, and told him he must go out into the road and guard all the gates.

“ ‘You may take the old mare, Dolly,’ said the farmer, ‘so you can watch on every side, and be sure now that you let nobody—man or beast—pass the bars.’

"The boy promised to do as he was bid, and it was not long before his obedience was put to a severe test.

"With merry shouts the party of huntsmen a few moments after came dashing up the road, and one after another they ordered the little fellow to dismount and open the gate whose secret fastening they did not understand.

"When he refused they began to offer him bribes, but all to no purpose.

"Then, completely out of patience, they scolded and threatened, but the little fellow was still immovable.

"At last one of the party came forward and in a voice of stern command said:

"'My boy do you not know me? I am the Duke of Wellington — when I give an order I expect to be obeyed. Open the gate at once that my huntsmen may pass through.'

"The little fellow lifted his hat and answered respectfully, but firmly:

"'If you are the Duke of Wellington, sir, I am sure you would not want me to disobey

orders. It is my master's command to keep the gate shut, and I cannot let any one pass through without his permission.'

"Greatly surprised and delighted, the old duke now lifted his own hat, and turning around to the party of huntsmen, he said :

"' Ah ! if I had a regiment of soldiers like that boy I could conquer not only the French, but the world !

"' The man or child who will obey orders unmoved by bribes or threats, no matter what comes, is a host in himself.'

"Then, ordering his huntsmen to select some other route for their day's pleasureing, he put a bright sovereign into the boy's hand, spurred up his horse and galloped away."

"What a brave boy !" exclaimed Robin ; "I think he was greater than Napoleon, for he did what that general couldn't do—he really kept out the Duke of Wellington!"

"And it was all because he 'obeyed orders'—don't forget that !" added Uncle Joe.

## THE MAGIC NEEDLE.



THE sun was shining brightly, a little "pewee" called from the maple bough, and now and then came a 'thud' of dropping apples down in the orchard.

Beth was getting impatient; she longed to put away her work and take a run out-of-doors, but the thread knotted and broke, and it seemed as if the long hem never would be finished.

"Madge!" she exclaimed suddenly, "I wish some good fairy would give me a 'magic needle.' Just think how fast I would make it fly over this sheet!"

"Pooh!" was her practical sister's rejoinder, "I guess the only way to make fairy tales come true is just to work them out; for my part I'd rather have a good, gold-eyed 'between' than any magic needle that was ever used in elf-land."

Mademoiselle, who happened to come in just then, heard the children's conversation, and taking her embroidery frame from the next room, she came and sat down beside them.

"Shall I tell you a story the Sisters of St. Mary told me one day, when like little Beth I longed for a magic needle?

"It was one bright June morning, I remember when the birds were singing merrily outside, and the summer sunshine as it streamed in through the open window made our little work-room at the convent seem drearier than ever.

"I was just learning a new and rather difficult stitch in embroidery, and it seemed to me I should never be able to make my pattern look anything like the exquisite pieces of 'nun's work' they showed me.

"'Why, child!' exclaimed Sister Annette, 'you must not expect to do everything at once. The magic needle you want can only be made out of time and patience.'

"Long years ago, there were five sisters who lived near a certain Abbey in England. Day after day they worked together upon a large piece of tapestry that was divided into five parts, so each could have an embroidery frame all by herself.



THE WORKROOM AT THE CONVENT.

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"Had you seen the intricate pattern of wheels and squares and diamonds, I know you would have exclaimed, 'Oh! it is just impossible to do all that with a common embroidery needle!' But no fairy, no machinery, nothing but a tiny bit of steel, just like that you hold in your hand, accomplished the marvellous piece of work.

"Of course it took a great many years, and before the tapestry was quite completed the happy home was broken up by the civil wars that distracted England in those days.

"Then the youngest sister died, and a simple white stone with the name 'Alice' upon it, was erected to her memory in the beautiful cathedral near by the old family manse.

"But the remaining sisters were not satisfied with this memorial; remembering the roll of tapestry they had wrought together, and into which so many happy thoughts were woven, they sent abroad for some of the most celebrated artists of the day, and had them work in colored glass the exquisite pattern, with its five distinct parts, uniting in one grand whole.

"When the beautiful window was completed, it was placed in the cathedral in such a manner that the warm, rich light, might always fall upon the white headstone just beneath.



"The marble has long since crumbled away to dust, but the picture of glass remains unchanged, and to this day every one who visits York Cathedral hastens to the north transept to see this wonderful window of the 'Five Sisters.'"

## THE COOKING SCHOOL.



BETH had just been presented with a miniature cake-board and rolling-pin ; she had long been an adept in making "mud pies," and some of her clay images were really quite shapely, but this working in dough was something she had never tried before, although with longing eyes she had often watched Nancy, the cook, as she rolled out her pastry.

Madge was too busy finishing off her Christmas gifts to be very much interested, when Beth first proposed a cooking-school, and Percy demurred a little on the score that it was only girl's play; Robin, however, entered into the play with enthusiasm, and Beth declared she would begin her school at once, though she had but a single scholar.

"And then, too, I have considerable myself to learn, you know," she said, confidentially, to Nancy, who was watching the preparations with a broad smile on her good-natured face.

"I think we will make doughnuts first, Robin, for I'd like to try my new rolling pin," began the little cook, "and Nancy says she's most ready to fry."



"All right," answered Robin, "I'm going to put lots of cinnamon and clove into mine, and nutmeg — only look here, Beth, they're dread-

fully hard; do you s'pose we put 'em in whole, and let 'em soften in the frying pan?"

"Dear me! what a boy," exclaimed Beth; "you must use the *ground* clove and cinnamon, of course, and as to the nutmegs, why, here's a grater!"

With a prolonged "oh!" Robin made an exchange of spice boxes, poured two tablespoonfuls of each kind into his mixture, and then began vigorously upon the nutmeg grater.

"It looks rather dark colored for doughnuts," he soliloquized; "but then, I s'pose they fade out, after awhile; at any rate, I think I'll put in a little more soda; perhaps that'll whiten 'em!"

Beth, meanwhile, was so busy rolling and cutting out her own little batch of dough, that she didn't notice Robin's perplexity.

"Come, children, hurry up," called Nancy; "the fat is piping hot now, if you want to fry your nut-cakes."

So the wonderful man that Robin was just manufacturing, was thrown into the pan minus both arms, and Beth's hearts, rounds, and dia-



"IT LOOKS RATHER DARK-COLORED FOR DOUGHNUTS."

monds were soon simmering away in the midst of Nancy's rings and lady's fingers.

Just as they were all "done to a T," Uncle Joe put his head into the kitchen with a "Fee, fi, fo, fum, I smell"—what is it? Not "an Englishman," he exclaimed, as Robin brought forward, on a large dinner plate, the immense man into whose marvelous composition he had put his whole batch of dough.

"No," said Beth, with a merry twinkle in her eye. "I think it must be that black giant you were telling us about. Why, as soon as Nancy put him into the pan he began to grow so fast that everything else tumbled out."

"Well, well, that was rather hard for the 'small fry,' laughed Uncle Joe; "but let us see what he tastes like. Whew! Why, he's hotter than 'the old South Church and Faneuil Hall' put together."

"I guess Master Robin's been a using my spice box pretty freely, pepper and all, by the way it looks," exclaimed Nancy.

"But Beth told me to take it, 'cause it had

the powdered kind of spice inside, and she's my teacher, you know," explained Robin.

"Yes, but I didn't s'pose you were going to take a cart load. However, don't cry, Robin dear," added Beth, "there always must be a first time, and everybody has to learn by experience, don't they, Nancy?"

Here Uncle Joe caught the little fellow in his arms, and began to tell him the wonderful story of St. Patty, who made pancakes 'once upon a time,' for three hunters who came to her door.

Robin quite forgot his tears and the unfortunate giant, as Uncle Joe pictured the pretty little cottage, and the robin that peeped in at the window, singing, "*One good turn deserves another,*" while Patty tossed and tossed her cakes till the hungry hunters had eaten all they wanted. "Next day," said Uncle Joe, "while she was at her work, the baron, who was really one of the hunters in disguise, came in great pomp to the cottage, claimed Patty as his bride, and declared that throughout all his realm pancakes should always be eaten thereafter on Shrove Tuesday."

## BRAVE MAX.



"COME and see old Max!" exclaimed Robin, one sharp, winter morning, as he came running in with cheeks aglow; "he's lain down right in the middle of a great snow-drift out in the orchard, and I've called and called, but I can't make him budge an inch!"

"Let's put on our rubber-boots," suggested Percy, "and see what's the matter."

"Tramp, tramp, tramp, the boys are marching," sang Robin, as encased in their 'high tops' the two little boys ploughed through the deep snow.

How strange it seemed out in the orchard, where the white drifts lay level with the high fences, and the low boughs of the apple trees were quite hidden under the soft, new-fallen snow. Could it be the same place where they had had such frolics in the fall?

"There he is, don't you see, Percy — way out there by the further tree," exclaimed Robin, pointing to a little black heap all curled up in the midst of one of the highest drifts.

"Why, there must be something or somebody under the snow," said Percy. "Oh, *oh*, *oh*! do look here, Robin!"

It was a funny enough sight, surely; for there fast asleep upon the warm, shaggy coat of patient Max, lay great black "Topsy" and her four little kittens.

How they all got into the orchard was a

mystery, but it was probably owing to Topsy's mousing propensities, which often tempted her to take long excursions from the safe precincts of home.

Her little family had evidently followed her down to the corn-house, where a nest of mice had kept them all so busy that the blinding, drifting snow storm, of the night before, had taken them unawares.

With a kitten perched upon each shoulder, and Topsy and Max following close behind, Percy and Robin ran back to the house.

When mamma heard the story, she said it reminded her of what old Max did 'once upon a time' when they lived up in the northern part of Vermont.

"You know your grandfather had a large sheep farm," she began, "and the flocks were often scattered, and some of the young lambs lost upon the hills, where they went to pasture.

"That was the reason why he wanted a genuine shepherd dog, and sent directly to Scotland to procure Max.



THEY SAW A SHEPHERD'S CROOK IN THE SNOW.

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"The dog, even from a little puppy, was wonderfully care-taking, faithful, and intelligent, and watched the flocks with the utmost vigilance.

"One night late in October, while the sheep were still pasturing on the hills, there came one of those early, unexpected snow-storms, that seem to throw one with a plunge right into the depths of winter.

"Max was up on 'the mountain,' as your grandfather always called the high hill on the west of the little valley where the sheep-cotes were built, and early that morning he came running down into the farm-yard, almost beside himself with leaping and barking and whining.

"Thinking that something had happened to the flocks, father called two or three of the farm hands, and they all hurried up the mountain, Max running far ahead and barking wildly all the way.

"At last, long before they reached the sheep-cotes, the dog stopped and began to paw eagerly all around a strange-looking heap that lay just under a large spruce tree.

"Upon coming nearer, the men saw a shepherd's crook in the snow, and just beyond a poor boy, who had evidently lost his way in the blinding snow-storm, and fallen down utterly bewildered and exhausted.

"With some difficulty they aroused him from his stupor, and brought him to the farm-house.

"I shall never forget how Max tried to show his delight by all sorts of dog language when the poor boy revived, and we carried him to his home on the other side of the mountain."



## GIPSY JOHN.



T was a long time before the children ceased talking of the little tramp, and once since his return home, Herbert had been over to see them.

One day when they were all having a make-believe play out of the adventures of those five weeks among the gipsies, mamma, who happened to come into the room just as Percy was shouldering his basket, said she would tell them a story of another little tramp called "Gipsy John," who lived more than a hundred years ago.

"It was in England," began mamma, "and although the little fellow was tramping about the country all alone, he had as many as six brothers and five sisters."

"But why didn't they all go together, just as gipsies usually do?" asked Percy.



**RINGING THE BELL.**

"Wait until you hear my story of little John, and then you will understand," said mamma.

"Over his shoulder at the end of a long stick, he carried a blue gingham handkerchief, in which was tied up all the clothing he had in the world, and in his pocket was an old leatheren purse with a few, a very few pieces of money in it.

"At night he sometimes slept in barns, and sometimes, when he could find no other place, upon the sheltered side of a hay stack.

"So he travelled on from day to day, getting a job whenever he could at the farm houses along the road, and taking bread and milk for his pay.

"At last he came to the city of Exeter — "

"Was that his home?" interrupted Robin.

"Oh, no; but in another part of England. Gipsy John had a father and mother whom he dearly loved, and it was to help them that he had left his home, and gone out into the world to seek his fortune."

"Then he wasn't a real out-and-out gipsy

who makes baskets and who tramps all over the country just because he likes that sort of life!" exclaimed Percy.

"Not just that kind, to be sure," said mamma; "but when he came into the city of Exeter, all hot and dusty and sunburnt, the school children in the streets cried, 'Oh, see that funny little gipsy!'

"It was the first time John had heard himself called by that name, and it made his cheeks tingle; he soon forgot all about that, however, when he saw the beautiful cathedral, and the books and pictures in the store windows.

"Oh, if he could only go to school, what a happy boy he would be!

"Just then, he heard somebody talking about the great university at Oxford; and although he knew it was two hundred miles away, he resolved to take up his knapsack and walk, if need be, the whole distance.

"Just think what a tramp it was!

"Footsore and tired enough was poor little

Gipsy John when at last he saw the towers of Oxford in the distance ; but with a brave heart he went at once to the colleges, and asked if they wanted a chore boy.

“ Greatly to his delight he found they did need some one at Exeter college to carry coal, clean the kettles and pans, ring the bell, and do various other jobs throughout the day.

“ Many a time you might have seen him with a book in his hand, as he went about his work, and once the students found, to their surprise, an old Greek grammar up in the belfry.

“ Whatever John did, whether to ring a bell, or scour a pan, or learn a lesson, was done to the very best of his ability ; and his industry and love of books soon attracted attention in the college.

“ At last he was admitted into some of the classes, and the authorities at Oxford, when they saw what a diligent scholar he was, gave him all the help they could, while he was working his way through college.

" He graduated at Oxford with great honors, became an eminent clergyman, and was finally appointed Bishop of Worcester; for it was none



other than the noted Dr. John Prideaux who was once called 'Gipsy John' by the little Exeter school children."

## A NUTTING PARTY.



T was Madge who found him — the funny little squirrel that Percy called Chickaree Chee. The children were out in the woods, chestnutting, for there had been a heavy frost the night before, and the ground was covered with great prickly burs all cracked open at the side, and just ready to shake out their treasures.

Madge had nearly filled her basket when she heard a curious little shriek right over her head; looking up, she saw a squirrel perched on a crotch of the hemlock tree close by, and holding up one tiny paw in the most beseeching manner.

Instead of darting away when she spoke, it sat quite still on its haunches, and looked steadily into her face.

“Why, Percy, Robin, do come here!” she exclaimed, for the boys were only a short distance from her, “there’s the prettiest squirrel on this



**CHICKAREE CHEE.**

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evergreen tree that you ever saw, and look ! he don't seem the least bit afraid."

" May be he's got something in his foot," suggested Percy ; " do you s'pose he'd let us see ? "

Without waiting for an answer from Madge, the eager boy rushed forward, dropped his basket, climbed the tree, and in another instant caught the unresisting little creature, and held him tightly in his chubby fists.

" Just see how tame he is !" exclaimed Madge.

" Yes, and he don't look a bit like the chip-monks we usually find around here ; but see, he has got quantities of those chestnut prickles into his feet, just as I thought ! "

Borrowing the great black-headed pin with which Madge fastened her jacket, Percy agreed to be the surgeon if Robin would hold the foot; and so, after a deal of squealing and squirming on the part of the little patient, the obstinate prickles were finally extracted.

Then with one comical nod of his head, as if to say, " I thank you, kind sirs, but really I can't

stop a moment longer," Chickaree Chee bounded out of their arms, and was soon hidden in the underbrush.

"What an ungrateful little creature!" exclaimed Madge. "I think the least he could do would be to stay and entertain us awhile, after all we did for him!"

"Hush!" said Percy, creeping stealthily along on hands and feet; "if you want to see a pretty sight, just come here — only don't make a breath of noise."

Just within the tangle of underbrush was an old, half-decayed tree, or rather stump, for the upper branches were all gone; and upon every side where the bark was torn away, could be seen a dozen or more holes, through each of which a squirrel's head was peering.

"It's a chipmonk's party, don't you understand?" whispered Percy, "and there is Chickaree Chee perched on the very top of the stump, and telling them all about his adventure."

Well, it was a funny sight, certainly; upon every side of the old stump a quantity of nuts

were scattered, as if for drying, and now and then one of the squirrels would leap out of his hiding place, fill his cheeks to their utmost capacity, and dart back again with a most satisfied chuckle.

Chickaree Chee seemed to be the host, for he was everywhere present, and the noisiest one of them all ; but his little wife was the most attentive to the wants of their guests, for while he was eating and chattering, she was constantly bringing out from some mysterious corner in the old stump a new installment of nuts.

“ No wonder Chickaree Chee was in such a hurry to leave us ! ” whispered Robin ; “ but I’m afraid if he has many more parties like this, he will use up all his stores and have nothing to eat when winter comes.”

“ Never fear that,” said Percy, “ for squirrels always lay by a much larger quantity of nuts than they ever need for themselves, and I shouldn’t wonder if they did it just for the sake of treating their friends, like generous Chickaree Chee.”

## THE LITTLE HOUSEKEEPERS.



AMMA had been "changing help," and everybody who has ever kept house, knows what trials and tribulations are contained in those two words. Madge and Beth — thoughtful little daughters that they were — wanted to brush up the crumbs after breakfast, "so as to save mamma the trouble of sweeping;" and as they went about their work gayly singing, mamma called them her two "merry housewives."

"Now don't forget, Beth, to clean the brush before you hang it up," said careful Madge, as,

standing at the open window, she shook off every particle of lint from her dusting-cloth.

"That is just what I'm doing, but dear me! do see how it is coming to pieces!" and Beth drew out a whole handful of bristles as she spoke.

"I should like to know how they make them stay in, anyway," she exclaimed, after a close examination of the little bundle of bristles, and the small holes into which they were originally inserted.

Madge looked, but was unable to solve the mystery, and so both children appealed to Mademoiselle, who happened just then to be passing through the room.

"Shall I tell you what I saw in a brush factory 'once upon a time?'

"It was when I was teaching in one of those large manufacturing towns in England, and the whole school were invited by the proprietor to visit his establishment, where nearly every sort of a brush is made.

"First we went into a large room where the



**BRUSHING UP THE CRUMBS.**

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bristles are unpacked, just as they come from Russia and Poland.

"They are all called 'hogs' bristles,' but they vary greatly in color, some being black, some grey, some yellow, some white, and some of a peculiar light color, that are always called by brush makers *lilies*.

"We saw many children in this room among the pickers, for their bright eyes and small fingers are often employed in sorting out the different colors, and arranging the bristles, end for end."

"But all brushes are not made of hogs' bristles," said Beth.

"Oh, no; horse hair, goats' hair, sable, badger, and other finer qualities are often used; but the hogs' bristles are stronger, and better adapted for dusting, scrubbing, and house-painters' brushes."

"Are the little pencil brushes we use with our water color paints really made of camels' hair?" inquired Madge.

"Well, as to that I can't say; but I shouldn't

be surprised if cats' hairs were more frequently used than camels'; artists' brushes, however, are constructed with the greatest care, and always command a high price.

"When a brush is 'single,' as they call it, the bristles or hairs are all fastened together in one bunch, and thrust into the quill or metal handle, where they are again secured.

"But when the brush is 'compound,' like the dust-brush Beth holds in her hand, the work is a deal more complicated.

"The bristles or hairs are all arranged in separate bundles, just large enough to fit into the holes that vary, of course, in the various brushes, and then they are dipped into a preparation of pitch or glue.

"The brush maker binds the bristles together firmly with pieces of stout pack thread, while the pitch is warm, and then the whole bunch is again thrust into the glutinous mixture before it is put into the handle."

"I should think," said Beth, "that the brushes ought to be very strong, if they are so careful in

making them, but the one I've been using this morning will soon be all holes and no bristles!"

"I imagine by the trade mark upon it that it was not made by an expert hand," said Mademoiselle; "there is as much difference in the manufacture of brushes as in anything else, and I have often heard it said that American brushes are never quite so reliable as those imported from France and England.

"I remember, however, to have seen, 'once upon a time,' two odd, ingenious brushes that I think must have been invented by genuine Yankees. One was constructed entirely from a large tropical plant called the cabbage palmetto, and it was made in such a way that the stem formed the handle, somewhat after the fashion of a palm-leaf fan.

"The other brush was made of a kind of galvanized steel, and was intended not for house cleaning purposes, but for the relief of persons troubled with nervous headaches."

"How curious!" exclaimed Beth, "and just think what a variety of brushes there are, when

we come to count them over. Besides dusting, scrubbing, house-painters', and artists' brushes, there are clothes brushes, hat brushes, tooth, nail, and hair brushes, window brushes, feather dusters, and —”

“Brooms—big, stout brooms!” interrupted Madge, seizing suddenly the largest one she could find; and rushing to the outside door that somebody had left wide open.

“Shu—*shu*—SHU!” she exclaimed, while Beth jumped up in astonishment, and Mademoiselle inquired if, like the old woman in Mother Goose, she were going “to sweep the cobwebs from the sky.”

“Not exactly,” laughed Madge, “but do look here! While we have been so busy talking, those great Shanghai hens have just walked coolly in, and left their tracks of mud all over the hall carpet.”

“Dear me!” exclaimed Beth, catching up the old dust brush. “I rather think if we are to be mamma’s housekeepers this morning, we had better talk less and work more.”

## TWO FOR A QUARTER.



HERE had been a few sharp nights, such as come sometimes quite early in the autumn; and the children, after protecting their flower beds with all the old newspapers they could find, began to think it was quite time to take up in pots the pet plants they wanted to keep through the winter.

"I must have a few pansy roots," said Madge, "and I mean to save one box of rich earth where I can sow morning glory and sweet pea seeds."

"But geraniums do better in the house than any other garden plants," said Beth, "and then, even if they don't blossom, the fresh, fragrant green makes one think of the summer days that are coming."

"Yes," said Mademoiselle, "and I never see one of those rose-scented geranium leaves without recalling a touching little incident that occurred 'once upon a time' when I was teaching in a young ladies' seminary in England."



LITTLE MAGGIE.

"Do tell us about it while we are at work!" exclaimed Beth, who had an insatiable love for stories, and especially Mademoiselle's.

"Well, let me see; I think I will have to tell you first, a little about our school. It was made up partly of boarding pupils, and partly of day scholars, and among the latter was one little girl about the age of Madge, in whom I became very much interested.

"She was a quiet, thoughtful child, and always came to her classes with lessons well-prepared; but one day I remember she made a slight mistake in pronunciation, at which the thoughtless girls began to laugh. I reproved them instantly, but not soon enough to prevent the great tears that suddenly filled little Maggie's blue eyes.

"When the hour for recess came, I called her to me, for I saw she was still crying, and tried to comfort her by telling her that the mistake she had made was a very natural one, and that probably not one person in a hundred could pronounce it correctly the first time.

" Maggie's face brightened a little, but as I questioned her further, I found there was a still heavier burden on her mind:

" 'The girls call me Irish Meg, the washer-woman's daughter, and say I can never be anybody, no matter how hard I try;' and here the poor child's sobs broke out afresh.

" I kissed the little girl, and told her that such rude remarks were not worth noticing at all; but it troubled me very much to know that we had any pupils in our school who were capable of such unkindness and injustice.

" Next day Maggie's seat was vacant, and after all my recitations were over, I put on my bonnet and shawl, and went down into the little alley where they told me she lived.

" After considerable difficulty I found the old, tumble-down tenement, and upon the very highest story, the two wretched rooms that Maggie called home.

" To the summons 'come in,' I opened the rickety door, and the very first thing I noticed was the almost overpowering perfume from a

couple of the largest geranium plants I had ever seen. They completely filled both windows, and darkened the room so much that I did not see even little Maggie, until she grasped my hand and pointed to the rude pallet in a corner of the further room.

“ ‘Mother’s had a fall,’ she sobbed, ‘and the doctor says she’ll never be able to use her arm again.’

“ When I looked at pale-faced little Maggie, and the poor woman all worn out with hard work, and suffering now the most intense pain from this unexpected calamity, my heart ached for both mother and child, and I longed for the purse of a millionaire.

“ It was, however, but little that any one could do for them that evening.

“ Upon inquiry I found they had fuel and food in the house to last them a few days, and after doing what I could to make the poor woman more comfortable, I kissed Maggie good-night, and promised to come again in the morning.

“ As I turned towards the door, the child put

into my hand a large bunch of the sweet-scented geranium leaves, saying :

“ Do take them ; I want so much to give you something, and these plants are all that I have.”

“ Dear child ! I found out afterwards that for weeks past she had been helping her mother by selling ‘ button-hole bouquets ’ made from the plants in her own little window garden. How she had managed to make them flourish so wonderfully was a mystery, but I think her love for all things beautiful gave her an instinctive sense or talent for horticulture. The slips that she started, ‘ two for a quarter,’ never failed to thrive, and we purchased a quantity for our greenhouse at the seminary.

“ You will be glad to know that Maggie’s mother recovered from the effects of her fall, and that through the exertions of her little daughter, they were able, not many months after, to rent a small florist’s establishment, where I think to this day they are earning a comfortable livelihood.”

## A SURPRISE FOR TWO.



GH! the horrid, ugly thing!" exclaimed Madge, as a huge frog leaped out from the midst of a clump of dazzling cardinal blossoms that she had just stooped to gather.

Nurse Gretna was with the children that day, and when she heard the startled exclamation of Madge, she hurried along with little Tom to see what was the matter.

"Oh, was it only a poor little frog? Why, you're not afraid of that, I hope!"

"No, not afraid," said Madge, "but frogs are such slimy, slippery creatures, it makes me shudder just to look at one."

"Well, children, it may seem a strange fancy to you," said nurse Gretna, "but for my part I have a real affection for frogs; when I was a little girl my brothers and I used to catch and tame them, and sometimes we would get the



**"OH, HOW SHE SCREAMED!"**

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young tad-poles, or pollywogs, as some people call them, and watch them turn into frogs."

"I wish we could do that," exclaimed Percy, who had a great love for everything out-of-doors, especially everything that "could breathe and move," as he expressed it.

"I suppose it's too late in the season to find any tadpoles, now," said nurse Gretna, "but next summer we'll get some, and then I'll show you how we used to take care of them."

"But can't you tell us now about the frogs you used to tame?" asked Robin.

"Well, let me see; I've almost forgotten just what we taught them to do, it was so long ago; still, I do remember the tricks of old 'Speckle Back,' as we called one that was beautifully mottled with gold and green.

"He was the largest and most knowing of the whole little colony we kept down by the brook, and soon learned not only to eat out of our hands, but to jump through four or five rings, one right after the other.

"The best thing, however, that old 'Speckle

Back' ever did was to save the life of my little sister Joan."

"Why, how could a frog save a person's life, I should like to know!" exclaimed Beth.

"Well, it happened in this way; our little cottage, as I told you, was just on the edge of the Thuringian forest, and very often, on hot summer days, we children used to take our porridge and milk and have 'make believe' picnics out under the trees.

"Little Joan sometimes came with us, and one morning when we older children were at school, she started off for the woods all by herself.

"Now, at a certain season of the year, we were always greatly troubled by swarms of enormous black flies, and my mother, to get rid of them, used to steep some poisonous herbs, and sweeten the mixture with a kind of thick sirup, of which we children were very fond.

"The morning I am speaking of, she had left upon the kitchen table a whole dishful of the deadly poison, and when no one was looking,

little Joan toddled into the room, climbed up to the table, and seizing dish and spoon in her chubby hands, away she trudged to our 'picnic rock' down by the brook.

"Now old 'Speckle Back' heard her coming, and thinking she had brought him something to eat, he gave one of his tremendous leaps, just as little Joan was nicely seated, and all ready to dip her spoon into the thick, sirupy mixture.

"Oh, how she screamed when she saw old 'Speckle Back' seated right in the midst of the dish! As for the poor frog, he was as much astonished and frightened as Joan.

"In vain he struggled and croaked to get free — the sweet trap held him fast; and when my mother, hearing the strange outcry, came running down to see what was the matter, Joan and old 'Speckle Back' were both screaming, the one high treble and the other low base, at the very top of their lungs.

"But the poisonous mixture, thanks to the sudden fright, was left quite untasted, and my mother, when she saw how narrowly our little

sister had escaped a horrible death, broke the dish into atoms, and never after could she be induced to make any sort of trap for the flies."

"Did poor old 'Speckle Back' get poisoned?" asked Percy.



"Well, that was a question we could not quite decide, for as soon as he was released, he leaped down into the brook, and we never saw him afterward."

## IN THE ORCHARD.



T was one of those rare "blue and gold" days — as still such days will come, even in late October — and the children were all down in the orchard where Patrick was gathering apples.

It was better fun than playing ball, to stand under the trees and catch the great red baldwins, and golden-brown russets as Patrick

tossed them down.

"Now do just be kereful, child'en," the old gardener exclaimed, when with reckless haste Percy ran forward to catch in his basket the apple that was intended for Robin ; "yer'll get a hard blow yet, whin yer leest expect it, if yer don't kape out o' the way ! And thin, young gintlemen, I'd just like to have yer know I'm



**“ WHY, YES INDEED ! ” SAID MADGE,**

not agoing to have yer father's nice fruit banged about in them baskets."

"All right, Patrick," answered Percy, "I forgot about their getting bruised, but I'm going to catch them in my hands now, so please throw me a big bouncer of a baldwin!"

"Let's play 'William Tell'" suggested Madge, "and put an apple on Robin's head as he stands there under the trees."

"But I don't want to be shot at!" exclaimed the little fellow.

"Oh, no, we only want to see if you can balance it — ah! you have to stand as straight as a soldier to keep that roly-poly of an apple on your head."

"Let's all try," exclaimed Percy, "and see who can keep one on the longest without its rolling off."

Just as they were in the midst of this experiment Beth spied a funny looking old woman coming down the hill.

"What do you s'pose she wants?" said

Madge, at the same time letting her apple roll off with a bound.

"I can't imagine," answered Beth, "but she looks just like pictures I've seen of old witches; dear me! I hope she isn't coming into our orchard!"

But it was very evident that this was the very thing the old woman intended to do, for letting down the bars, she crept through the fence, and came hobbling along to where the children were standing.

When Beth saw the poor, wrinkled face, her fear changed at once into pity.

"I thought mebbe as how you might have a few apples to spare," began the old woman, in a feeble voice.

"Why, yes indeed!" exclaimed Madge, "I know there were lots, last year, that just rotted under the trees because we didn't know what to do with them. I'll run up to the house and ask mamma, but I'm very sure she will be glad to give you some."

With many expressions of gratitude the old

woman sat down under the trees, and waited until Madge came back.

She had evidently walked a long distance, for she was all out of breath, and covered with dust from the crown of her funny little bonnet to the tips of her old shoes.

"Do you live in the city?" asked Beth.

"Yes, dear, away down in Ferry Court, at the North End."

"But you havn't walked all that long ways this morning!" exclaimed Percy.

"Oh, yes, I started early, for I promised little Meg I would be back before night."

"Why, who is Meg?" inquired Robin.

"My little grand-daughter; she is about as big as you, but the poor child has never taken a step in all her life, for she is a cripple."

"Oh, how hard that must be!" said Beth, her eyes filling with tears as she thought of the little helpless girl, suffering and alone, while they were having such merry frolics together.

"But she is very patient and happy," said the

old woman, "and always has a bright smile for me when I come home at night."

"Do you have to go away and leave her alone every day?" asked Percy.

"I don't often leave her so long as I have today, but I need to be at my fruit stand all the time I can get, for that's the way we manage to keep soul and body together — me and little Meg."

The children were greatly interested, and rehearsed the whole story to mamma when she came back with Madge.

The honesty of the old woman's face confirmed the truth of her words, and besides giving her a large basket of apples, mamma filled another with delicacies for little sick Meg, into which the children all begged to put a few favorite toys.

Nor did their charity end here, for when mamma drove into the city, she went herself to the wretched home in Ferry Court, and all winter long the children were constantly doing something for little Meg and her grandmother.

## SOAP BUBBLES.



O look, mamma," shouted Percy and Robin one morning, as they came slowly trudging up-stairs, each carrying something in his chubby hands with the utmost care, " Uncle Joe has brought you a pair of the *beautifulest* vases you ever saw, all made of frozen soap-bubbles!"

"Vases made of what, children?" exclaimed mamma.

" Why, of something that shines and glistens, and is all full of rainbows inside. There, don't you see, as I hold mine up to the light, mamma," said Percy, " how much those little globes at the bottom look like the soap bubbles we made the other day ? "

" Well, they are certainly very beautiful, and not unlike soap-bubbles in form and transparency, but I imagine you have found them a little heavier to lift than the bubbles."



**THE BRIGHT, BEAUTIFUL PLAYTHING.**

"Yes, indeed," said Robin, "when Uncle Joe handed me one I nearly dropped it, for I took hold of it as if it were light as a feather."

"But, mamma," said Percy, "if the vases are not made of soap-bubbles, do tell us how the manufacturers make them show the colors of the rainbow so plainly."

"I have never seen the work done, but this 'iridescence,' as it is called, must be produced by some sort of chemical action on the glass that oxydizes it in a peculiar manner. Among the ruins of Assyria, and in some of the old Greek and Roman buildings, pieces of glass have been found, that through long exposure to the weather, have become so 'iridescent' that they look almost like opal. When we go again, on Saturday, to the Art Museum, I will show you some beautiful specimens in the Cesnola Collection."

The children were delighted at this latter proposition, and began immediately to count the intervening days.

"It seems an age, don't it, till day after to-

morrow's to-morrow?" exclaimed Percy, "but I'll tell you what we'll do to-day, Robin, if mamma is willing; nurse Gretna is washing out some of baby Tom's dresses down in the kitchen, and I know she'll let us have some nice soap-suds to blow up into bubbles, and—"

"Oh, mamma, please let us!" put in Robin, "we've got on our old suits, and we won't make a bit of a 'muss.'"

Mamma willingly consented, and a half hour later peeped in upon a pretty picture, as she opened the kitchen door.

Percy was just upon the point of loosing from his pipe the largest bubble of all, and even baby Tom held his breath lest the bright, beautiful plaything should suddenly vanish from his sight.

How prettily it soared, higher and higher, till at length, passing through the open window, it touched the maple tree and was gone.

"What becomes of all the bubbles, mamma, when they break?" asked Percy.

"The air passes out, and the tiny particle of

water remains wherever the bubble breaks, as you will readily perceive when it touches your hand."

"But why do we always use soap when we want to make bubbles?" asked Robin.

"Because of the chemical change it makes in the water; but I was reading not long ago," continued mamma, "of something else that is used for soap out in Nevada."

"Do tell us about it," exclaimed Percy.

"It is what they call *steatite*, and was found in a large stratum several feet deep, near Smith's Creek, in Elko county. Bring the atlas, Robin, and I'll show you the place; when it is first dug out from the bluff the steatite looks exactly like great masses of mottled Castile soap, and the farmers, cattle-men, and sheep-herders in that part of the country use it, just as we do soap, for all washing purposes."

"Do the children put it into water, mamma, and blow bubbles with it?" asked Percy.

"I suppose so, for I doubt if any of them ever saw a piece of soap."

"How curious it seems to think of digging out soap just as one does coal!" exclaimed Robin.

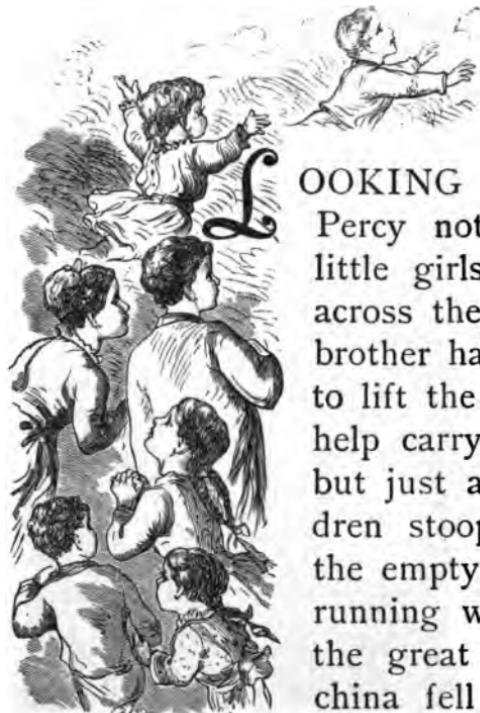
"Yes, but it must be very clean work, and just think what fun," exclaimed Percy, "to find a piece of soap already made, and more than eight feet in diameter."

"I wonder if either of you can tell me," said mamma, "how soap is manufactured?"

"I don't think I can exactly," answered Percy, "but I suppose there is a deal of oil and fat put into the mixture."

"Yes, and the purer the oil or fat, the better the soap; but it is not until potash or soda is added that the soap is formed; and it is in this caustic lye (as it is called) that all the greasy substances are boiled. Castile soap is made of olive oil and soda, and the curious veining is caused by the oxide of iron that is used in the coloring. If cocoanut instead of olive oil is put into the mixture, the soap will dissolve in salt water, and this is the kind of soap that is used at sea."

## THE WONDERFUL PITCHERS.



LOOKING out of the window, Percy noticed a couple of little girls at the old pump across the way. Their big brother had come with them to lift the heavy handle, and help carry home the water ; but just as one of the children stooped down to put the empty pitcher where the running water could fill it, the great slippery piece of china fell from her hands, and was broken into countless pieces.

“ Oh, isn’t that too bad ! ” exclaimed Percy.

“ And just see how the poor little girl is crying,” added Madge, who, hearing the crash, had



THE TWO LITTLE GIRLS AT THE PUMP.

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come to the window to see what was the matter.

"Can't we lend her one of our pitchers mamma?" asked Robin.

"Yes, indeed, if it would do her any good, but I imagine the little girl would not be satisfied with any other than her own, and that, like 'humpty-dumpty,' can never be put together again."

Beth, meanwhile, had run across the street to make further investigations, and soon came running back with a cut finger, resulting from over-curiosity in examining the pieces.

"It must have been one of those great willow-ware pitchers, like grandmother's," she exclaimed, "and the little girl said her mother charged her to be very careful and not break it, for it was more than a hundred years old."

Uncle Joe, who happened to come in just then, heard the last words, and wanted to know what ancient personage they were talking about.

So the whole story of the catastrophe was repeated by the eager children, and after every

particular had been dwelt upon, and a deal of sympathy expressed for the little girl, Uncle Joe asked them if they had ever heard about the wonderful pitchers, that by breaking into thousands of pieces, thousands of years ago, helped to conquer a mighty army.

"Why, no indeed!" exclaimed all the children, as they crowded around Uncle Joe, and begged for the story.

"Well, 'once upon a time,' he began, "in a certain beautiful valley, there were two armies drawn up in battle array; it was ages before gunpowder was used, so they had no cannon or rifles, but plenty of spears and swords.

"Upon one side there were only three hundred men, while on the other, the countless tiers of soldiery seemed as thick as grasshoppers, and as for the camels, why, you might as well count the sands on the seashore as to try to number them."

"Dear me, Uncle Joe! Is it a true story you are telling us?" exclaimed Madge.

"‘I tell the tale as it was told to me,’” said Uncle Joe, very solemnly; and the children, eager to hear the rest of the story, asked no more questions for awhile.

“Now the three hundred men had a very brave captain, and when he looked out and saw the enemies’ tents in the valley, he divided his soldiers into three companies, and gave every man a trumpet and a pitcher and a lamp.”

“What funny things to give soldiers,” exclaimed Robin.

“And I don’t see how one man could carry all three in his hands,” said Madge.

“Oh, that was easy enough,” said Uncle Joe “for the lamps were put into the pitchers, and then the right hands of the soldiers were free to hold the trumpets.

“But the captain told them they must keep very quiet, and wait until the middle of the night; then at a given signal they were to do just what they saw him do.

“Well, when the hour arrived, they all came to the outside of the camp, and standing close

by their captain, they watched his every movement.

"Taking his stand very near the outer row of the enemies' tents, he first raised his trumpet to his lips, and every one of the three hundred men did the same thing at the same instant.

"Then with one long, loud blast upon the trumpets, they all threw their great earthen pitchers to the ground, holding the lamps firmly in their left hands."

"What a crash it must have made!" exclaimed Percy.

"Yes, indeed, and the hosts of the enemies, although there was nothing in the world to be afraid of, were so panic-stricken at the strange noise that they rushed out of their tents, and began to run back and forth in confusion.

"Then they unsheathed their swords, and in the confusion and darkness of the night killed one another instead of the three hundred who, with their captain stood, each man in his own place, round about the tents.

"When the enemy found out, at last, what

terrible havoc they were making in their own camp, the remainder of the host fled in dismay, and a complete victory was won by the three hundred, without the use of a single weapon save those wonderful pitchers."

"But what was the name of the brave captain, Uncle Joe?" asked Percy.

"Look in the seventh chapter of Judges, my boy, and you will find not only the captain's name, but the whole story."



## THREE AGAINST THREE.



T was out in the meadow that the contest began — the fragrant, fresh-mown meadow close by the great wheat-field where weeks ago the little Argonaut had wandered, and where the children had had their merry games of “harvest home.”

Two little cousins, Grace and Bertha, had come from the city to spend the day, and the happy bevy of children after ransacking the play room, frolicing in the barn, and picnicing under the trees, now turned to one another and asked what should be done next.

“Oh, I know!” exclaimed Grace; “there’s just six of us, so let’s play the ‘game of three.’”

“Why, what sort of a game is that?” inquired Madge, “I do hope it isn’t anything like the dreadful ‘rule of three’ in arithmetic.”

“Oh, no! it isn’t a bit like that, though to be

sure I did take it from one of my school books."

"A game out of a school-book? How curious!" exclaimed Beth, "do tell us all about it before we begin to play."

"But it will be ever so much more interesting if I illustrate as we go along — now, first of all, we must choose sides."

"You must be leader, then, for you are the oldest, and know all about the game."

"Very well, I'll select for one side," said Grace, "and Robin must select for the other, because he is the youngest. There, now you see we stand 'three against three,' for I have Beth and Percy on my side, and Robin has Madge and Bertha on his. Do you see the great forest of pines over there that looks as if it were coming down to meet the meadow? Well, let's play that is the Roman army. Then, this grove of oaks on the other side will do very well for the Alban troops.

"Now, 'once upon a time' — I think my Latin Reader said it was somewhere about the

"THEY STOOD 'THREE AGAINST THREE'."



year 630, B. C.—there was a famous Roman captain, who had a son called Tullus Hostilus.

“The father had fought very bravely under Romulus, and so the citizens of Rome wanted to make his son their king.

“In the very beginning of his reign, there were hostile feelings between the Romans and Albans that led to a war between the two nations.”

“Don’t use such big words, Grace,” exclaimed Bertha, “I should think you were reading from your Latin Book.”

“Well, the very words that I translated always come into my mind when I begin to tell the story, but I’ll make everything as plain as possible.”

“Who were the Albans, Grace?” inquired Percy.

“Oh, they were a strong, warlike people that lived close by the Romans, and they had a securely fortified city on Monte Cavo, called Alba, where the followers of *Æneas* used to fly for protection in time of war.

"Now, to go back to my story: there were among the Romans three brothers called the Horatii, who were very strong and brave, and they had three cousins among the Albans, called the Curiatii, who were considered equally good soldiers.

"When the two armies were drawn up in line of battle, these cousins said they would settle the quarrel just among themselves, and so prevent any more loss of life.

"They stood 'three against three' just as we do, and —"

"But on which side are we? the Curiatii or Horatii," interrupted Percy.

"Oh, that remains to be seen," said Grace, "for I don't know yet which side is the stronger, but if you are all ready, we'll begin now."

"There, don't pull too hard, but pull all together."

"Dear me! Robin is down already, and has taken with him Madge and Bertha, so they must be the three Curiatii, who were all wounded. Now, our side will have to be the Horatii, and

two of us must 'make believe' fall, for there was only one of the Horatii left.

"Here, Percy, you play the part of conqueror, and start off towards the Roman camp; just as you reach the first big rock, one of the Curiatii must get up and try to follow, but you must draw a 'make believe' sword and drive him back. Then the two others, one after another, must do the same thing just as the wounded Curiatii really did, but don't forget Percy, that you are one of the Horatii, and must conquer every time.

"This battle of the three on the Fossa Cluilia ended that war between the Romans and Albans, but my Latin Reader says it wasn't a great while after, that another quarrel came up between them. This last time the city of Alba was quite destroyed, and the people came to Rome where homes were given them on the Cœlian Hills."

"Well," said Robin, "it's all very interesting, and I like the 'game of three' just as a play, but, dear me, I'm glad enough it is all 'make believe' and not down-right earnest."

## SAVING THE FORT.



HERE was a great racket up in the play-room — overturning of chairs, jingling of bells, and now and then a sound, as if yards of rope were drawn across the floor.

"Shure, ma'am, and the plastering is beginning to fall!" exclaimed Nancy, running in dismay from the room below stairs where she was doing her Tuesday's ironing, "and ivery minit, ma'am, I ixpect to see one of them child'en a-tumblin' through the ceilin'."

Now mamma had no fears of so serious a catastrophe as this, but the noise in the play-room was certainly growing unendurable, so laying down her sewing, she quietly opened the door to see what was the matter.

"Why, it's a great fire, mamma!" exclaimed Percy, "most equal to the big Boston fire, and we've called out all the steam engines and all

the hose-carriages we could find. See ! we have made us some firemen's caps out of newspaper, and we're working like—like Trojans to put out the flames ! ”

Mamma laughed outright when she saw the curious medley before her; the chairs were turned upside down for engines, Beth's baby-house was moved into the middle of the floor, and the “firemen” while emptying it of its contents, were pouring upon the imaginary flames streams of imaginary water, from imaginary buckets and hose.

“I think we shall save it, mamma, don't you ? ” exclaimed Robin, wiping great drops of perspiration from his face.

“Well, I certainly hope that you will ‘save the pieces.’ But wouldn't it be well for the brave firemen to make less noise and to handle these delicate toys a little more carefully ? ”

“I'm sorry we disturbed you mamma, but we haven't broken a single thing,” said Percy, “and we've saved the lives of all the dolls—



HE MOUNTED THE LADDER. Digitized by Google

see! we've taken them out through the windows, and not even a hair of their heads is singed."

The whole play was so real to the eager boys that mamma entered into the spirit of it, too, and told the children that after they had put



everything back into its place, she would tell them a story of a certain brave fireman who saved a fort 'once upon a time.'

It was not long before the play-room was in excellent order again, and the two boys were sitting down quietly by mamma.

"It was a number of years ago that it all happened, and I think I will let you take pencil and paper to write down what I am going to tell you," began mamma.

"First of all you may write down the numbers, 1718, for that was the year in which this brave man was born."

"What was his name, mamma?" asked Robin.

"Israel — Israel Putnam, and when he was a little boy like you and Percy he lived at Pomfret, in Connecticut.

"On one side, the town was all hemmed in by thick woods when little Israel lived there, and one day he had a strange adventure with a wolf —"

"Oh, do tell us about it, mamma," interrupted Robin.

"But there will be only time to tell you one story now, so we will keep the wolf story until

to-morrow, and to-day you shall hear how Israel Putnam saved the burning fort.

"It was when he was a young man, and a war broke out between the French and English colonies that caused the loss of many lives on both sides.

"Israel was working on a farm when he heard that more men were wanted to fill the ranks, and leaving everything, he enlisted at once as a volunteer.

"A brave, courageous soldier, he was frequently called upon to lead the troops in times of danger, and after awhile he was sent to Crown Point to take charge of the garrison there. One night he saw a bright light in one of the wooden wings at Fort Edward. As he looked it kept growing brighter and redder till at length a tongue of flame burst through the roof.

"Calling his men to follow, he instantly raised the alarm of 'Fire' and hastened forward to the burning building.

"Thoughtless of his own safety and anxious to save the lives of others, he mounted the ladder and stood on the roof while the men below handed him bucket after bucket of water."

"But why didn't they use a hose?" asked Percy.

"Because there was none to use, and every moment the flames were coming nearer and nearer to the magazine, where all the powder belonging to the fort, was stored away.

"Putnam, however, at the risk of his life, still kept vigorously at work, while heavy timbers and showers of sparks fell all about him."

"But did the fire reach the powder magazine at last?" asked Percy, excitedly.

"No, the flames were put out before there was any chance of an explosion, but history tells us that the saving of Fort Edward, at that time, was wholly due to Israel Putnam's brave exertions.

"To-morrow I will tell you more of his wonderful courage and presence of mind."

## A LEAP FOR LIFE.



TOMORROW had become to-day, and the children were eagerly waiting for the clock to strike three, as that was the time mamma had promised to tell them the wolf-story.

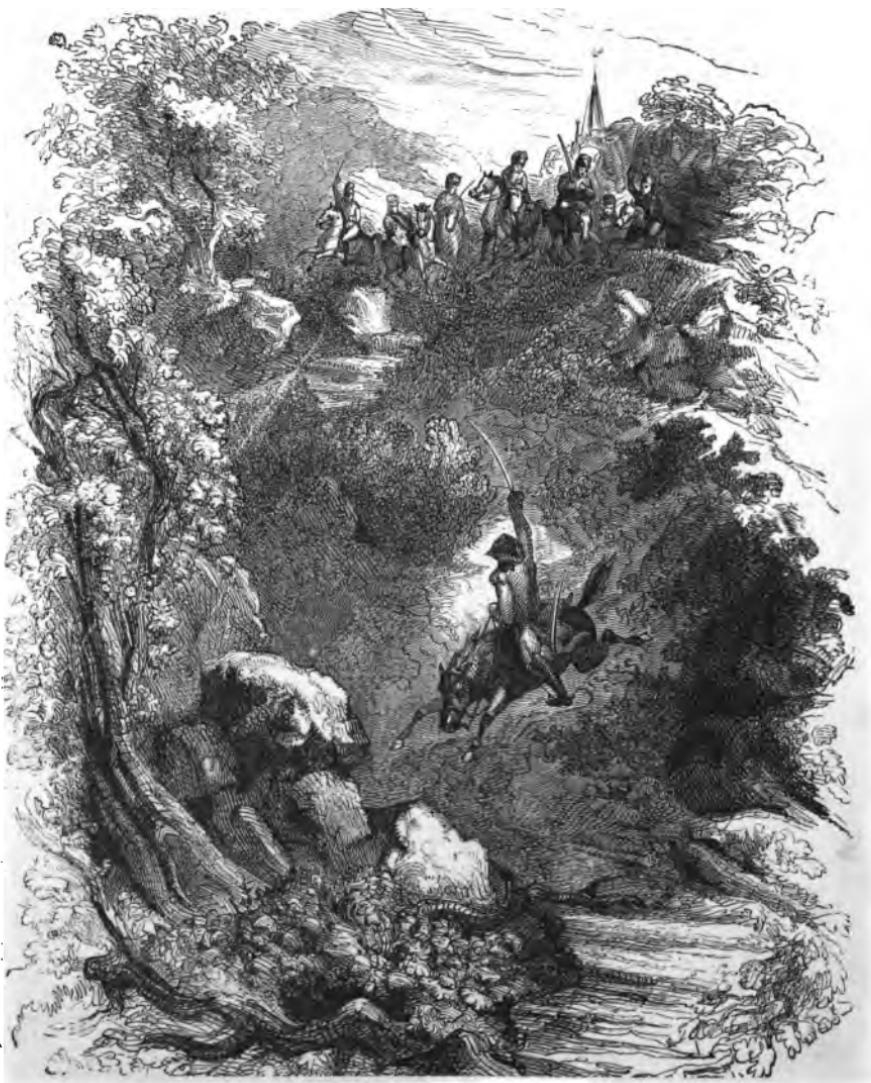
Meanwhile, however, the boys had been having numerous imaginary encounters among themselves, and when mamma opened the playroom door, a little figure encased in a shaggy mat, came running up to meet her.

"I'm the wolf, mamma, don't you see?" exclaimed a voice from beneath the mat.

"Indeed, and where is your den, Mr. Wolf," laughed mamma.

"Right here, under the sofa, and this is the way I go in," said the animated mat, with a spring in that direction.

"But how can I tell stories to a wolf, I wonder!" exclaimed mamma.



**SPURRING HIS HORSE.**

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Another spring, and a very rumpled little boy made his appearance.

"The wolf has gone, and we are all ready now—that is, as soon as I've brushed my hair!" added Robin, as he suddenly caught a glimpse of himself in the glass.

"And don't forget the wolf's paws, my boy," said mamma, as she held up the little grimy hands to the light.

"There, now if we are really all ready to begin, I will tell you more about Putnam.

"'Once upon a time,' when Israel was a boy, the farmers all about his home were very much troubled by a great wolf that came prowling around their yards at night."

"A wolf looks like a big dog, mamma, does it not?" asked Percy.

"In form, perhaps, but no dog was ever so strong and fierce as a wolf; and when Israel saw the great eyes gleaming at him, he realized what a dangerous enemy he had aroused."

"Did he find him in his den, or did he meet the wolf in the woods?" asked Robin.

" He took a lighted torch and went alone into the cavern where he knew the wolf had hidden away. It was a very rash thing to do, and it would not have been strange had he lost his life in doing it. But Putnam was very strong and when the wolf came forward with a growl, he raised his cudgel and struck such a heavy blow that the animal fell down, and died after a few gasps.

" You see Putnam had the same fearless spirit then, that he showed throughout his whole life, and it seems as if he always thought of others before himself.

" After he had saved Fort Edward, and the war between the French and English colonies was over, he went back to his farm in Connecticut, and stayed quietly at home until the Revolutionary war broke out.

" When the news came of the battle of Lexington, he was out in the fields, and, in order to lose no time in joining the minute men, he left his plough standing in the furrows and hurried off to the thickest of the fight.

"In the battle of Bunker Hill he showed great bravery, and was appointed Major-General.

"After that he was sent to complete the fortifications at New York, and when Fort Montgomery yielded to the enemy, he selected West Point as the next place that needed a garrison.

"It was here among the Highlands that he took a famous 'leap for life,' and won the day!"

"Do tell us all about it, mamma!" exclaimed the eager children.

"It was at one of the outposts of the garrison called Horseneck, and it happened in the month of March, 1779.

"Gen. Putnam had only about a hundred and fifty men with him that day, and when he came to the brow of the hill, he was surprised by a large detachment of English soldiery, under Gov. Tryon.

"Fifteen hundred 'red coats' against one hundred and fifty of the Federal troops promised a very unequal combat, and beside the advantage of numbers, the English had every advantage of position.

"Now it so happened that near by the Federal troops there was a great swamp, and when Gen. Putnam saw no other means of escape he told his soldiers to hide there until he joined them.

"Nearer and nearer came the 'regimentals,' but Putnam, although he stood quite alone, never flinched; by the time they had reached the top of the hill, his own soldiers were safely hidden in the swamp, and Putnam spurring his horse, took a fearful leap and plunged hundreds of feet down the rocky hillside—a bullet whizzing through his cap before he reached the valley.

"Not one of the British cavalry dared to follow, and while they were finding some other route to the valley, Putnam joined his men and aroused all the Federal troops in the neighborhood. In the battle that ensued, the British were completely defeated and fifty of their number taken prisoners. It is said that Putnam was so kind to these prisoners that the British general sent him a note of thanks."

## SOME CURIOUS HEADDRESSES.



HERE were to be a number of new shelves fitted into the kitchen pantry, and the carpenter had just brought his bench and tools, when Madge and Beth passed through the laundry.

"Oh! do let's stop and get some shaving curls," exclaimed Beth, and so

both children waited until the carpenter had planed off his boards and strewed the floor with clippings.

"There, Madge, I'm going to pile up the curls on your head until you look like that old-fashion plate we saw the other day. Let me see, the cushions and puffs and curls were built up just a foot from the eyebrows, were they not?"

"I know the lady's head looked very comical,



"LET'S WAIT AND GET SOME SHAVING CURLS."

but dear me! I don't see how she kept on all the rubbish," said Madge, shaking off the mass of wooden curls as she spoke.

"She must have stood up very straight, and put in plenty of hair-pins," said Beth, "but let's take a quantity of these shavings up into the play-room and make believe we are two of the court ladies in the reign of George III."

"All right," responded Madge, who liked nothing better on a rainy morning than to get up all sorts of curious costumes; "I'll go up into the attic and find that old calash, mamma's grandmother used to wear, and we'll put on those funny high-heeled slippers with the great buckles, and make mamma a call."

As they had no dressing-maids it took some time for the court ladies to prepare their toilets, but when the last touch had been given to the great pompadours, they surveyed themselves before the looking-glass, with considerable satisfaction.

"Won't mamma be surprised?" exclaimed Beth, as with a great clatter of heels the court

ladies descended the stairs and tapped on the parlor door.

Mamma could hardly keep from laughing when she saw the comical little personages, but coming forward she received the court ladies with all possible ceremony, and a very stately call it was until Beth's pompadour suddenly dropped to the floor, and the "make believe" play vanished like a cloud.

"But mamma," said Madge, "how was it the real court ladies could wear so much on their heads?"

"Well, I suppose the hair-dressers had their own secret of building up those firm looking pagodas of 'fuss and feathers,' but I think they must always have been exceedingly hot and uncomfortable to wear.

"The plain roll just over the forehead was very pretty and becoming, but just think of carrying about on 'one small head' a mountain of wool, wire, lawn, lace, gauze, ribbon, flowers, feathers and powder, all at one time.

"I remember to have read about one lady, whose monstrous head-dress caught fire 'once upon a time,' and she was terribly burned before it could be removed.

"But the foolish fashion of these immense pompadours did not last long, and when George IV. ascended the throne, the whole style of dress from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, became more simple."



## KITTIKIN'S FAMILY.



HEN Beth returned from her visit to grandma's, she found that Madge, Percy and Robin had all gone to the beach with Uncle Joe; so, taking black Topsy in her arms for an audience, she told her the following wonderful story of Kittikin's family.

"I should never think, Topsy," she began, "that grandma's beautiful Kittikin was any relation of yours, and yet I know she is your own sister. What! you naughty cat—are you trying to scratch me? Where are your manners, I should like to know! Kittikin never, no never behaves so, and I'm just ashamed of you, Topsy!"

"Now just lie down and be quiet while I tell you the story.

"'Once upon a time' there was an old red hen who had six eggs in her nest—yes, Topsy, there were just half a dozen eggs when I looked

into the barrel, but before the chickens were hatched, the hen got frightened, ran away, and wouldn't come back to her nest.

"Now Kittikin came out into the barn that very morning, and looked into the barrel.

"I wish you could have seen, Topsy, how carefully she stepped over the eggs, and then how easily she lay down in the nest, just as she had seen the old hen do.

"Well, she staid there all day, only coming up to the house at dinner time to get something to eat.

"The next day and the next, she did the very same thing, and when I looked into the barrel again, Topsy, what do you think I found?

"I could peep in very easily, for the barrel was turned over on the side, and there, right under Kittikin's paws, were five little downy chickens!

"She was lapping them just as if they were kittens, and purring all the time.

"Dear old Kittikins just think what a kind mother she was to those poor little chicks!



TAKING BLACK TOPSY IN HER ARMS.

"I wondered what had become of the sixth egg and looked into the nest; there was the broken shell, but the tiny, fluffy thing inside, never moved, and poor old Kittikin mewed pitifully when she found it was dead.

"The next day she brought all the other chickens up to the house, carrying them one by one in her mouth just as if they were kittens, and not strong enough to walk themselves.

"I'm afraid you would have killed them, Topsy, but Kittikin took them up so carefully, that she hardly disturbed a feather.

"Oh, Topsy, they were such pretty chickens! One was a real golden yellow, and I called it 'Little Buttercup'; and another that was just as black as a coal, Topsy, I named for you.

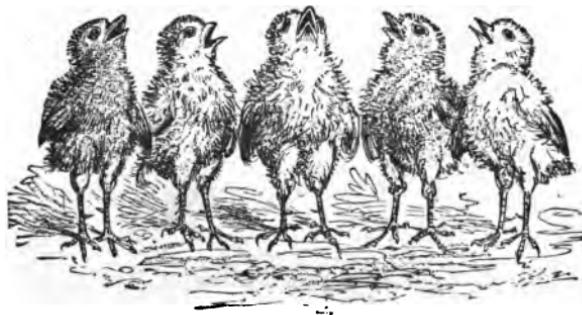
"And then there was a funny little drab creature that we called 'Mousie,' besides 'Speckle' and 'Spangle,' the other two that were always together.

"You should have seen, Topsy, how proud Kittikin was of her little family.

"When the people who lived near grandma's

heard about the chickens, a great many came to see them, but Kittikin was so anxious and disturbed that one night she took the chickens and hid them in an old closet, out in the carriage-house.

"After that grandma got a big squirrel cage and put them all into it, to see how Kittikin and the chickens would get along together.



"It was funny enough to see the little fluffy things jump up on Kittikin's back, or cuddle down beside her while she was sleeping and purring by turns.

"It seemed to trouble her, however, that whenever she wanted to take a nap the chickens were

sure to be uneasy, and one day when her eyes were closed I took them, one by one, and carried them into the shed.

"No sooner did Kittin hear their 'peep, peep,' than she left the cage and going out into the shed, began to mew; the chickens came right up to her, and putting her paw under one, she took it up in her mouth and carried it to the cage. That was 'Buttercup'; but 'Mousie' 'Topsy,' 'Speckle' and 'Spangle' followed, and when they were all safely back, Kittin curled up in the corner and went to sleep again."



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